

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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STRIVING READERS COMPREHENSIVE

LITERACY PROGRAM

STATE GRANT COMPETITION DEVELOPMENT

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PUBLIC AND EXPERT INPUT MEETING

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FRIDAY

NOVEMBER 19, 2010

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The meeting convened, in the PCP Auditorium, Potomac Center Plaza, 550 12th Street S.W., Washington, D.C., at 9:00 a.m., Deborah Spitz, U.S. Department of Education, presiding.

PRESENT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DEBORAH SPITZ, Group Leader, Early Childhood
and Reading Group, Office of Elementary and
Secondary Education

CARL HARRIS, Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Policy and State Technical Assistance,
Office of Elementary and Secondary
Education

THELMA MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA, Assistant
Secretary, Office of Elementary and
Secondary Education

JACQUELINE JONES, Senior Advisor to the
Secretary for Early Learning

MICHAEL YUDIN, Deputy Assistant Secretary,
Office of Elementary and Secondary
Education

EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT

MICHAEL KAMIL, Consulting Professor of
Education, Stanford University

NONIE LESAUX, Associate Professor in Human
Development and Urban Education
Advancement, Graduate School of Education,
Harvard University

PAIGE PULLEN, Associate Professor, Curry

School of Education

JILL SLACK, Director of Literacy, Louisiana
Department of Education

DOROTHY STRICKLAND, Professor Emerita,
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey

WYNNE TYE, Assistant Superintendent of
Curriculum and Instruction, Hillsborough

County Public Schools

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 9:09 a.m.

3 MS. SPITZ: (Presiding) Good
4 morning, everyone.

5 We had wanted to start exactly at
6 9:00, but, of course, these things never go
7 quite the way you expect them to. So, we are
8 starting; it's 9:10.

9 And thank you for being here. We
10 have a very busy morning and a busy day for
11 those of you who wish to stay for the whole
12 day. But you will hear a lot more about what
13 the day is going to consist of. Also, all the
14 handouts are outside at the table.

15 My name is Deborah Spitz. I
16 manage a group of reading programs at the
17 Department of Education in the Department's
18 Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

19 This morning I am going to
20 introduce our facilitator for this morning's
21 panel.

22 And again, if you need anything,

1 the folks at the table from Synergy will be
2 happy to help you.

3 So, our facilitator for today, I
4 am very pleased to introduce Dr. Thelma
5 Melendez de Santa Ana. She is our Assistant
6 Secretary of the Elementary and Secondary
7 Education Office at the Department. She has
8 been there since July 2009. You may imagine
9 this is a critical role at the Department,
10 especially right now with reauthorization in
11 process.

12 Dr. Melendez serves as the policy
13 advisor to the Secretary on all things
14 relating to early learning, elementary and
15 secondary education. She is fostering
16 educational improvement at the state and local
17 levels throughout the nation through her
18 management of programs like Title I, but a
19 number of others as well.

20 Prior to coming to the Department,
21 Dr. Melendez served as the Superintendent of
22 the Pomona District Unified School District in

1 Southern California. This is a District that
2 served 31,000 students, three-quarters of whom
3 are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
4 and 44 percent were English language learners.
5 She was responsible for the three highest
6 increases in the academic proficiency index in
7 the District's history.

8 In 2009, she was selected by the
9 American Association of School Administrators
10 as California Superintendent of the Year, and
11 she has also received a number of other
12 honors, including a 2007 award for Latina of
13 Excellence by Hispanic Magazine.

14 In 2005, she was recognized as an
15 Outstanding K-to-12 School Leader and
16 Distinguished Partner for Educational
17 Excellence.

18 And in 2003, she was named
19 Outstanding Educator of the Year by the LA
20 County Bilingual Directors' Association. And
21 there's others as well, and we have a detailed
22 bio for you.

1 Dr. Melendez earned her Ph.D. from
2 the University of Southern California,
3 specializing in language, literacy, and
4 learning.

5 So, we are really pleased, both
6 I'm pleased to work for her at the Department
7 and we are very pleased to have her
8 facilitating this morning's discussion.

9 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Thank
10 you, Deborah.

11 Can you all hear me? No? Is the
12 microphone on? I don't think the microphone
13 is on. Is it on now? I'll use my principal's
14 voice. How's that?

15 (Laughter.)

16 Does that work? Can you hear me?
17 Okay.

18 I just want to welcome all of you
19 today. It is sort of a real privilege to be
20 able to facilitate this distinguished panel
21 today.

22 I know it is taking time out of

1 your day, but, for us at the Department, it is
2 extremely important that we receive and hear
3 input from you and that we are able to develop
4 a grant competition that reflects what the
5 public feels and what the public feels is
6 important, as well as what experts say is
7 important.

8 So, to help us in this discussion,
9 we have a wide range of experts who are here
10 to discuss literacy as it relates to a variety
11 of different priorities, including increasing
12 the achievement of English learners and
13 students with disabilities.

14 I also look forward to hearing
15 your insight, your ideas, and your feedback
16 about this important program.

17 I would like to start off by
18 asking Deborah to come back up and to take us
19 through the actual grant itself and the
20 Striving Leaders Comprehensive Literacy, so we
21 have sort of an understanding of what the
22 grant is about and what the purpose of this

1 meeting is about as well.

2 MS. SPITZ: I am going to go
3 through this very briefly, actually. You have
4 the handout.

5 We get a lot of questions about
6 this program. It is very new and it is
7 somewhat complicated. So, we do get
8 questions, and you can always call our office.
9 There will be contact information at the end,
10 and you can ask us questions about this
11 program.

12 But we wanted to give you a basic
13 written-out line of what the key parts of the
14 program are. So, I will go through this
15 quickly because we have some great people for
16 you to hear from today.

17 So, Striving Leaders Comprehensive
18 Literacy is a different program for us in a
19 couple of ways. One is that it does serve
20 birth to grade 12. That is very different for
21 us.

22 The other is that it is kind of

1 this two-part program in that it has a small
2 formula component and a large competitive
3 grant component. All of the funds will go to
4 states, and states will, then, make awards to
5 districts.

6 Everything I am going to discuss
7 very briefly or everything that is in the
8 PowerPoints is actually from statutory
9 language.

10 This program was created by
11 Congress in the FY2010 Appropriations Act.
12 So, these are some details about funding,
13 which you can read on your own. Basically, we
14 just made small awards to all the states,
15 well, most of the states that applied. These
16 are formula awards. They were roughly, for
17 most states, they were \$150,000. So, that is
18 a small amount of money, but that is enough
19 for states to get started. It is either for
20 them to enhance existing state literacy teams
21 or to build new state literacy teams, and
22 again, to enhance or create state literacy

1 plans.

2 Again, these plans need to cover
3 birth to grade 12. They need to cover
4 students who are English language learners and
5 students with disabilities.

6 So, some states, a lot of states
7 have comprehensive literacy plans, but they
8 may not be as comprehensive as this program.
9 So, these funds will support that.

10 For the competitive program, which
11 I think is probably why you are here, we will
12 be holding a competition in the spring. The
13 eligible entities will be SEAs, or State
14 Education Agencies.

15 The states that did receive
16 funding under this program -- and we don't
17 know how many states will receive funding
18 under this program. It depends who wins and
19 how large those states are. Then, they have
20 to make subgrant awards to school districts or
21 basically LEAs or early learning providers --
22 and we will talk about that a little bit more

1 -- to fund services that have the
2 characteristics of effective literacy
3 instruction in these components: professional
4 development, screening and assessment,
5 targeted intervention, and other research-
6 based methods of improving classroom
7 instruction.

8 Again, this is statutory language,
9 so this is our mission, but this isn't
10 language that we are flexible on. This is our
11 statutory language.

12 So, this is a key part of the
13 program. This is the breakdown of how states
14 that win these funds will have to use the
15 funds. Again, this is in statute.

16 So, it is up to 5 percent for
17 state leadership activities, and those are
18 administrative functions, evaluation,
19 technical assistance. And then, the breakouts
20 by age. So, it's up to 15 percent for birth
21 to pre-K, 40 percent for grades K to five, 40
22 percent for grades six to twelve, with

1 equitable distribution between middle and high
2 school.

3 And states have very different
4 ways of doing middle and high school. So,
5 that will be something that states will have
6 to figure out, you know, what that
7 distribution is.

8 This is the definition of who is
9 eligible, and I am not going to read this to
10 you. Again, this is statutory language, and
11 it is a little bit lengthy.

12 What this says is that eligible
13 entities, because we know that a lot of early
14 learning providers are not LEAs, there is this
15 provision to allow for other type of entities
16 to apply for funding to the state. But this
17 is a lengthy description, and I will let you
18 read that on your own.

19 And this is basically our
20 timeline. We just awarded the formula funds.
21 That means states are all developing their
22 comprehensive literacy plans. They can use

1 whatever they have developed in terms of
2 applying for the competitive grants, if they
3 wish. We hope to publish a notice inviting
4 applications January to February, and that all
5 depends mostly on our clearance process.

6 So, we are here today to get your
7 input as we develop the NIA. Once we have
8 gotten your input and processed all of it, we
9 will put an NIA into clearance, and then we go
10 through that process.

11 So, we generally provide, we hope
12 to provide basically a 60-day window for
13 states to apply. Then, we do our peer review
14 process and make our grant awards, hopefully,
15 by August 2011.

16 And with that, I will turn it back
17 over to Dr. Melendez.

18 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Let me
19 go through the agenda quickly.

20 First of all, we have just gone
21 through the welcome and setting the stage. In
22 just a few minutes, we will have expert

1 presentations from our panelists. During that
2 time, the expert guests will each discuss
3 pertinent areas to the grant.

4 The presentations will be followed
5 by a short discussion with our expert panel
6 and the Department of Education staff members
7 who are seated here.

8 Afterwards, we will open it up to
9 public speakers, and those of you who have
10 already signed up know what number you are.
11 This will be an opportunity for members of the
12 public who have registered. But, also, if you
13 have not registered and would like to, you can
14 go over to the table outside and register.
15 There is still time, if you would like.

16 Okay. Let's go through some goals
17 and some norms for this input meeting.
18 Deborah showed a little bit about what is
19 important.

20 First of all, this is a meeting to
21 develop our Notice Inviting Applications.
22 That requires states to develop high-quality

1 proposals that will result in the increase in
2 student achievement.

3 One way to develop, as Deborah
4 described, is by providing time for the public
5 to give input to the program. This is
6 extremely important for us, and we really look
7 forward to hearing from you.

8 We also hope that this meeting
9 will paint a picture or sort of a vision of
10 what a comprehensive literacy program could
11 and should be, and what it should look like,
12 both at the state and local levels.

13 This meeting is an opportunity for
14 Department of Education staff to receive
15 expert and public guidance in response to the
16 questions that were asked in the notice.

17 A few more brief points to set
18 expectations for this meeting:

19 First of all, we are on a tight
20 schedule, and we started a little late.
21 Since, again, we want to maximize time for
22 public input, we will be keeping very close

1 tabs on time. So there is a group here that
2 is helping us to maintain our schedule. So,
3 you will see them holding up signs that give
4 us warning of time.

5 And just one last reminder:
6 please, if you have a cell phone, if you could
7 put it on vibrate, that would be very helpful.
8 We don't want to have any distractions while
9 our speakers are presenting. We owe them the
10 courtesy of that.

11 Okay. This is your handout. If
12 you have any questions, please feel free to
13 contact us.

14 Let me start off with just
15 mentioning who we are going to have today as
16 part of our panel.

17 We have Michael Kamil, who is a
18 Consulting Professor from Stanford University,
19 School of Education.

20 We have Dorothy Strickland,
21 Professor Emerita and Distinguished Research
22 Fellow from the National Institute for Early

1 Education Research from Rutgers State
2 University of New Jersey.

3 And we have Nonie Lesaux,
4 Associate Professor of Human Development and
5 Urban Education Advancement at the Harvard
6 Graduate School of Education.

7 And these will be our panelists
8 this morning. We will have three panelists in
9 the afternoon session as well.

10 Okay. So, let me start off by
11 also introducing, you've already met Deborah,
12 but also introducing Michael Yudin, who is the
13 Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of
14 Elementary and Secondary Education.

15 And so, Education staff, then, at
16 the end of the three presentations, will ask
17 questions of our panelists. We might have
18 time for maybe two or three questions, but we
19 wanted to have that opportunity to do that.

20 Okay. So, let me start off by
21 introducing our first speaker. That is
22 Professor Dorothy Strickland.

1 Professor Strickland is the Samuel
2 DeWitt Proctor Professor of Education Emerita,
3 as I mentioned, from Rutgers -- I always
4 mispronounce it; I think it is my English
5 language background -- (Laughter) -- Rutgers
6 State University of New Jersey, a former
7 classroom teacher, reading consultant,
8 learning disabilities specialist. She is a
9 Past President of both the International
10 Reading Association and the Reading Hall of
11 Fame.

12 She received IRA's Outstanding
13 Teacher Educator of Reading Award, the
14 National Council of Teachers of English Award,
15 as Outstanding Educator in the Language Arts,
16 and the National-Louis University Ferguson
17 Award for Outstanding Contributions to Early
18 Childhood Education.

19 She was invited to give the 2008
20 Dean Shaw Distinguished Lecture at Harvard
21 University.

22 She currently serves on the

1 National Academy of Sciences Committee on
2 Teacher Education, authorized by Congress, and
3 the National Early Literacy Panel.

4 She is a member of the panels that
5 produced Becoming a Nation of Readers,
6 Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young
7 Children, and the RAND Report, "Reading for
8 Understanding". Her latest publications
9 include "Literacy Leadership in Early
10 Childhood, Learning about Print in Preschool
11 Settings", "Bridging the Literacy Achievement
12 Gap 4-12", and "The Administration and
13 Supervision of Reading Programs".

14 She is a member of the New Jersey
15 State Board of Education.

16 It is my pleasure to introduce
17 Professor Strickland.

18 DR. STRICKLAND: Thank you. Thank
19 you very much.

20 I hope that long introduction
21 won't be taken off of my 20 minutes.

22 (Laughter.)

1 Good morning, everyone. I'm
2 delighted to be here.

3 I think this is a very important
4 topic, an important project. I am thrilled to
5 see that it is expanded to include the
6 earliest years right through high school. And
7 yet, I think it is going to be a daunting task
8 to do that, and to do it well.

9 I am going to move on. As an
10 overview, my feeling and my approach about
11 this whole effort is that it truly is
12 comprehensive -- and that word has been used
13 many times already this morning -- and
14 coordinated, and it is going to be really
15 important for the grantees' program of
16 prevention and intervention.

17 So, I think the prevention part is
18 really something that we will be focusing on
19 during those very early years and beyond, and
20 across all levels and points of instruction
21 and involvement.

22 And I have organized my remarks

1 around that intersection, those places where
2 we will be focusing on the instruction and
3 involvement, state level, LEAs, school, and
4 early childhood centers, classroom, and the
5 Striving Readers Program.

6 First, what are some of the key
7 considerations that ought to be addressed in
8 these grant proposals? Certainly,
9 articulation across all levels of education,
10 birth through high school. These would be
11 some of the things that I would look for. You
12 know, a deliberate plan that includes that
13 kind of articulation.

14 And special, a new emphasis on
15 early childhood literacy development. This is
16 new, and I think that, as I said before, it
17 will be a challenge to make this all work.

18 Interestingly enough, exactly one
19 year ago today, November 19th, 2009, I
20 testified before the House Education and Labor
21 Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary
22 and Secondary Education. And they asked me to

1 focus my testimony on zero to 5. I am going
2 to hit some of the highlights of that talk
3 right now very, very quickly.

4 I addressed three questions and
5 then talked a little bit about my work as an
6 evaluator of Early Reading First. But, first,
7 the importance of early literacy development,
8 and key ideas here are that literacy learning
9 starts early and persists throughout life.

10 From the earliest years,
11 everything we do counts. That is an important
12 message to get across. It's a big, big
13 message and one that people don't often think
14 about in terms of literacy with a very young
15 child.

16 Oral language and literacy develop
17 concurrently. What children learn about oral
18 language and what they do with oral language
19 affects literacy. Oral language is
20 foundational; no question about it. But there
21 is that interdependence, that interplay
22 between the two that is so important.

1 A second one was, what is needed
2 to support young children's language and
3 literacy development? Here is where that
4 intersect between parents, teachers,
5 caregivers, all of those people need to be
6 mentioned and addressed as well as the policy
7 people and the administrators at all points
8 along the way.

9 There is a lot that we can do to
10 improve what we're doing right now, certainly,
11 with standards that reflect a shared view of
12 where we're headed, a shared vision. And that
13 is sometimes difficult because there is
14 resistance, especially on the part of early
15 childhood people, to join the rest of the
16 gang, quite frankly, because we're busy
17 protecting children from those people at the
18 upper-grade level.

19 So, this is going to be kind of
20 nuanced, but also deliberate that we work
21 together. I think we can do it.

22 And I think that it is important

1 that the family be involved at these early
2 levels and beyond those early levels, not just
3 with young children.

4 Differentiated instruction, I will
5 say that more than once in this brief talk.
6 Differentiation starts with a good
7 organizational plan at the school level and
8 the classroom level, and then teaching to
9 targeted populations who might be among those
10 driving readers and writers. You notice I am
11 going to be talking about readers and writers,
12 which is implied, indeed, but that is very
13 important.

14 Certainly, struggling learners of
15 all types, English learners, students with
16 disabilities, and knowledge and respect for
17 the cultural and linguistic diversity of these
18 children, not only knowledge on the part of
19 the teachers, but also that these things will
20 be addressed.

21 And then, on articulation between
22 the Striving Readers Program and regular

1 education. Too often, when new programs come
2 in, they are ancillary. You know, they are
3 parallel and they are not linked to the
4 regular program.

5 I would look for evidence that
6 people are addressing this not only in terms
7 of programmatic issues, but also the personnel
8 that are involved throughout.

9 Assessment: screening certainly
10 from the earliest years and beyond as well.
11 And then, assessment that really is used to
12 inform decisions. I would want to see
13 evidence there that that assessment is not
14 just going to be a group of numbers somewhere
15 that is satisfied, but a deliberate plan for
16 documentation in a variety of ways and, also,
17 plans for what the assessment reveals and what
18 we are going to do about it.

19 Strategic use of media technology,
20 and I probably should have underlined
21 "strategic", not just technology for its own
22 sake, but technology that is used in a

1 purposeful way.

2 This is so important. I am
3 serving on a lot of committees that deal with
4 technology, and I worry a great deal that
5 sometimes the technology overwhelms the real
6 purpose behind instruction and the goals.
7 Technology is going to be an important part,
8 I think, of anything that we do, but it needs
9 to serve, not be served just for its own sake.

10 Ongoing professional development,
11 and, here again, it is not a tack-on, but it
12 is an embedded, integral part of the program
13 itself.

14 And then, of course, the links. I
15 think there should be links to a variety of
16 different organizations. The money in this
17 grant I think, if I were to advocate, we up
18 the money a lot, a whole lot.

19 I think that it is important that
20 it is being done and that this money is being
21 allocated, but there is just so much to do.
22 So, I think that it makes it even more

1 important that there be links to national,
2 state, and local professional organizations.
3 And I am thinking the ones that I know best,
4 certainly, International Reading Association,
5 the National Council of Teachers of English,
6 in terms of professional organizations.

7 And certainly, at very young
8 levels, Reach Out and Read, Reading Is
9 Fundamental, and Reading Is Fundamental
10 Beyond, those kinds of organizations that we
11 have worked with before can have an impact
12 here; other organizations as well, to be sure.
13 But I have a feeling that there is going to be
14 a need for combined effort, and I would like
15 to see that kind of thing as a part of a
16 proposal.

17 Also, of course, attention to the
18 research base. I know the others will talk
19 about that even more, but I would like to see
20 proposals that not only acknowledge that there
21 is research behind the kinds of things they
22 are advocating, but include some references to

1 that in the proposals.

2 At the state level, I would see
3 the use of those key components that I just
4 outlined, those 10 components, to guide,
5 review, and evaluate proposed plans. So,
6 there's got to be some basis for the decisions
7 that are made and how they are implemented.

8 And, of course, they would guide,
9 monitor, and assess effective implementation
10 of selected proposals. So, the state will be
11 an important element in the overview and the
12 guidance of the entire effort.

13 The state would establish and
14 coordinate the state literacy team and a State
15 Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education
16 and Care. I know that that Advisory Council,
17 I think those are in place already, but,
18 again, they need to represent various aspects
19 of the educational community.

20 And then, provide the leadership
21 in linking the LEAs with relevant
22 organizations, and I have mentioned some, but

1 others as well, to make sure that we are
2 getting the best bang for our buck. I think
3 this is going to be a real challenge for
4 people. Why not use the resources that are
5 there and willing and able?

6 District-level responsibilities:
7 again, that word "sustainability" I probably
8 should have put in red and very, very large
9 letters. I worry a great deal that we don't
10 put in place right from the beginning some
11 kind of systematic approach to keep this going
12 when the money isn't there anymore. It
13 shouldn't be something that is just added on,
14 and then when the money goes, it is abandoned.

15 It is some recognition that we
16 have got to make this a part of the overall
17 effort, so that it is sustainable. I would
18 look very carefully at those qualities in any
19 proposal.

20 So, again at the district level,
21 providing leadership and support, linking all
22 of those elements of education, standards,

1 curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

2 Those are the key elements. They need to be
3 linked together and that should be a
4 demonstrated part of the proposals.

5 And again, providing leadership,
6 and I don't really need to go through that
7 again. But, again, at the local level, those
8 community-based organizations, any relevant
9 organizations I think should be a part of the
10 effort as well.

11 School-level responsibilities:
12 again, the focus on sustainability. This is
13 a serious, serious problem. I am afraid
14 sometimes that new programs, new initiatives
15 are looked at by some members of the school
16 community as just another burden, rather than
17 something that is there to support what they
18 are already doing.

19 So, some evidence that this has
20 been considered and that there are links made
21 not only through the organizational process
22 that is in place, but through the professional

1 development. So that, the professional
2 development is not just for those few people
3 that are directly responsible for this
4 program, but professional development for
5 everyone who is responsible for the literacy
6 development of these children, whether or not
7 they are struggling readers and writers.

8 I mean this is so important
9 because they need to feel part of this
10 program, so that they can work together. This
11 avoids fragmentation and also will avoid this
12 program being something that is used to
13 supplant or take the place of the regular
14 programs that should address the needs of
15 struggling readers anyway. This should
16 support, not supplant, what is going on on an
17 everyday basis. These kids need extra
18 attention, extra help, additional support.

19 So, lots of collaboration all
20 along the way, and very specifically with
21 content area teachers and, by the way -- and
22 I think here's where the new Common Core

1 Standards will really be helpful -- the whole
2 notion that in the regular program, indeed,
3 there should be links with the content areas
4 and the literacy. We have been talking about
5 this for at least 200 years. That's how long
6 I have been around; we've been talking about
7 it.

8 And yet, it is still not done as
9 much as it should be, but the new Common Core
10 Standards really demand it. So, I am really
11 looking forward to that all along the way.

12 Support professional development
13 of all involved and building capacity. If we
14 look at it that way, it won't be an add-on; it
15 won't be a tack-on, just something that is
16 there until the grant runs out.

17 So, it is that synergy that I am
18 talking about, based on principles of
19 developmentally-appropriate practice. People
20 at the early grades talk about this a lot,
21 but, you know, there is adolescent literacy,
22 there is adolescent development. So,

1 developmentally-appropriate practice is
2 relevant throughout.

3 It should be engaging. There's no
4 reason why it can't be interesting.

5 Scaffolded, that is certainly an effort that
6 needs to be focused on in the classroom,
7 teachers who show kids how to do it and what
8 to do, not just tell them.

9 I have already talked about
10 differentiation. And again, it is how we
11 organize the curriculum as well as what
12 happens in the classroom.

13 Explicit instruction, yes, but
14 planful, and that is a word that is not in my
15 dictionary on the computer. It always comes
16 up. But I like that word, "planful". That
17 is, there is planned activities for children
18 to do that link to that direct instruction
19 that they can do independently or in small
20 groups.

21 Formative assessment, I could go
22 on and on and on. A really good plan is going

1 to have a strong, formative assessment
2 component that helps teachers record data.
3 And I'm not just talking about numbers. I'm
4 talking about work samples that they have
5 actually reviewed and made decisions about in
6 terms of what a child knows as well as what a
7 child needs, and then made instructional
8 decisions based on it, and, of course, that
9 synergy between knowledge base in terms of
10 content and the English language arts.

11 Just quickly, some cautionary
12 notes: very often, these are elements of
13 proposals of this sort. Especially the
14 struggling readers in the past, I know very
15 often extended time was a key element.

16 With the proposals, be careful
17 that these are designed well. It is not just
18 tacking on an hour at the end of the day.
19 More time, if it is not used wisely, is not
20 good investment in the child's time. The
21 child's time is important.

22 Use of appropriately-difficult

1 texts, again, if they are still dealing with
2 text they can't read, then they can't learn
3 the strategies for reading from those texts.
4 So, we need texts that they can handle, so
5 that we can teach the strategies through them.

6 Expert instruction, just not a
7 nice, warm body in there at the end of the
8 day, really specialized people who know what
9 they are doing in terms of reading. So, I
10 would be curious to see what the staff that is
11 involved, what their background would be.

12 And this last one looks like, what
13 is she talking about? You know, there are a
14 lot of these programs where the kids don't
15 read and write very much. You know, circling
16 worksheets is not reading and writing.

17 Specialized staff, some things to
18 consider: appropriate selection, shared
19 understanding of roles, and use of time and
20 effort. Get these people together and let
21 them work together.

22 Tutoring, a word about that.

1 Training and supervision, not, again, just
2 finding people who want to help. Consistency
3 of effort, coordination. It is that kind of
4 progress monitoring that can be very informal.

5 And then, I have already talked
6 about technology and some of the things that
7 we need to consider.

8 And the heart of it all,
9 professional development.

10 I have 30 seconds and I am ending
11 on time, thank goodness.

12 Professional development is
13 everything, and it really needs to be embedded
14 into the program. What we learn in
15 professional development, we do. What we do,
16 we come back and share and we talk about and
17 we learn more things, and it is something that
18 is ongoing. This is the heart and soul, I
19 think, of really making it an excellent
20 program.

21 And I am told to stop, and believe
22 it or not, I'm finished.

1 (Laughter.)

2 Thank you very, very much.

3 (Applause.)

4 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Thank
5 you, Professor Strickland. Thank you very
6 much.

7 I would like to ask Professor
8 Kamil, next, please, and I will share his bio.

9 Professor Kamil is a faculty
10 member in the School of Education at Stanford
11 University. He served on the Steering
12 Committee of the United States 2009
13 Administration of PISA.

14 He is a member of the Adolescent
15 Literacy Advisory Board for the Alliance for
16 Excellent Education.

17 Professor Kamil shared on the
18 research panel for the New York State ELA
19 Standards Revision.

20 He is also an advisor for the
21 Louisiana Department of Education Adolescent
22 Literacy Plan and works in similar capacities

1 for State Departments of Education in Oregon
2 and in New Jersey.

3 He was a member of the Feedback
4 Group and the Writing Team for the Common Core
5 Standards. He was a member of the National
6 Reading Panel and was a member of the RAND
7 Corporation Reading Study Group.

8 He is a member of the National
9 Literacy Panel, synthesizing reading research
10 on language minority students. He chaired the
11 Planning Committee for the 2009 National
12 Assessment of Educational Progress Reading
13 Framework.

14 In addition, he is a member of the
15 Carnegie Corporation Advisory Council on
16 Advancing Adolescent Literacy. He is also the
17 Chair of the Reading Advisory Panel for the
18 Pacific Regional Educational Laboratory.

19 He recently served as the Chair of
20 the Panel that produced "Improving Adolescent
21 Literacy, Effective Classroom and Intervention
22 Practices", a Practice Guide from the

1 Institute of Educational Sciences.

2 Other publications have included
3 "Handbooks of Reading Research", Volumes 1, 2,
4 3, and 4. He also co-edited a volume on early
5 childhood professional development for Susan
6 Neuman, "Preparing Teachers for the Early
7 Childhood Classroom", that has just been
8 released.

9 So, Professor?

10 DR. KAMIL: Thank you.

11 I always hate long introductions
12 because it shows that I wasn't smart enough to
13 say no to some things.

14 (Laughter.)

15 Let me start. Here are some
16 questions that I wanted to address. I am not
17 going to read the questions to you so much as
18 just let you look at them.

19 The first thing that needs to be
20 addressed in any proposal about striving
21 readers is instruction. I want to start with
22 the Common Core as a set of targets. It is a

1 broad umbrella that embraces all four
2 communication skills.

3 And what I am going to do is give
4 you the sort of philosophical highlights of
5 what we want skilled readers to be able to do.
6 These are characteristics for skilled readers.

7 And independence is the No. 1
8 thing here. Coming from the Silicon Valley,
9 where we do a lot of collaborative efforts,
10 this is sometimes shortchanged in favor of
11 collaboration. We need to have both.

12 Strong content is one of the
13 things that many standards efforts overlook,
14 particularly in literacy and the fact that
15 literacy is key to building strong content
16 knowledge. And in reading and writing,
17 although it is easier to see in writing
18 perhaps than this, that a skilled reader
19 responds to the demands of audience, task,
20 purpose, and discipline.

21 Common Core is one of the few
22 explicit recognitions that reading is

1 different across different content areas;
2 writing is different across different content
3 areas, different disciplines.

4 Comprehend as well as critique is
5 another thing that skilled readers have to do,
6 not only to understand, but be able to be
7 critical and analytic about what it is they
8 have read.

9 Perhaps the most important one
10 here, this probably should be first, but I am
11 honoring the Common Core list, is valuing
12 evidence. It turns out in the very recent
13 2009 12th grade NAEP data, what distinguishes
14 advanced readers from everybody else is their
15 ability to understand the text and provide
16 evidence that their understanding is the
17 correct interpretation.

18 Students need to use technology
19 strategically and capably, and they need to
20 understand other cultures. It's a long list
21 of things, but those are the things that we
22 have got to guarantee that even striving

1 readers get, and that needs to be at the core
2 of the proposal.

3 I am just going to show you where
4 these also fit in terms of other policy
5 issues. National Assessment has a new
6 framework at the beginning of last year in
7 which these are the cognitive targets. You
8 can't escape that, even if you do
9 international benchmarking. The PISA
10 framework, which was also new in 2009, has
11 essentially the same cognitive targets. Those
12 are what we have to get students to be able to
13 do, no matter what else we do with them.

14 Several years ago, two years ago I
15 guess, the Institute for Educational Sciences
16 produced what we call a Practice Guide. There
17 are five recommendations in instruction. I
18 give you these without spending a lot of time
19 elaborating them.

20 But at least this ought to be the
21 core for striving readers. This was the
22 intent of that document. It is what you do in

1 practice to follow up on making adolescent
2 literacy better.

3 It turns out that, for the first
4 two and the last one, the evidence base is
5 extremely strong, and for the middle two, it
6 is moderate. So, these are pretty high
7 recommendations, so a lot of research to back
8 that up.

9 Let me also say that now we are
10 going to move into sort of a professional
11 development issue, but teachers need to be
12 prepared on that. If you have looked at the
13 Common Core, I like to joke that there are 12
14 teachers out there who could teach those right
15 now.

16 We need to spend a lot of time in
17 professional development -- I think you are
18 going to hear that as a general theme --
19 because we are requiring different things and
20 we are requiring much more sophistication in
21 terms of teaching.

22 Teaching reading in the

1 disciplines, in particular, has been neglected
2 over and over again, despite all the rhetoric,
3 over at least 75 years of people claiming that
4 every teacher should teach reading.

5 The valuing of the evidence is
6 another thing that we don't do a lot of. And
7 again, that's important.

8 But the other thing is we need to
9 start well before students get to be
10 adolescent. As we back this up to see how we
11 prepare students to do that as adolescents, we
12 have got to worry about the transitions
13 between stages in schools.

14 So, students moving from home to a
15 pre-K setting, moving from a pre-K setting to
16 a formal kindergarten setting, moving from
17 fourth grade in the elementary format to a
18 very rigid scheduling of middle school, and
19 then on to ninth grade, those transitions are
20 essential to consider in terms of making sure
21 that the alignment is appropriate. And these
22 comprehensive plans that are being developed

1 by the states need to account for that, and it
2 needs to be reflected in successful proposals.

3 One other important thing about
4 instruction is that we need to make sure that
5 we provide appropriate support for instruction
6 for students. In that list of five
7 recommendations, the last one is strategic
8 tutoring. Sometimes that instructional
9 support can't be done in the classroom. A
10 successful proposal for striving readers has
11 to account for taking students out of the
12 classroom, so that you don't spend all of the
13 time on a very few students and let the other
14 ones suffer. We need to add additional time.
15 And that's where extended time for literacy
16 for me is easy to work into the schedule for
17 those students who need it.

18 I don't want to spend a lot of
19 time and ignore writing, which we have
20 recently found some wonderful work by Stephen
21 Graham and his colleagues in a document called
22 "Writing to Read", which shows that writing

1 actually can improve reading. And we have
2 known that for a long time. Now we have a
3 research base and an analysis to show that.

4 I'm also going to suggest that we
5 need to think about 21st century skills in a
6 realistic context. If you look at most 21st
7 century skills and you want to be serious
8 about them, they require lots more 19th
9 century skills than they do 21st century
10 skills.

11 So, the reading part of that
12 becomes even more essential in 21st century
13 skills; writing as well. If you want to take
14 a look at almost any manual that comes with
15 your VCR or DVD player, you know that writing
16 is an important skill that we need to develop.

17 So, let me turn to professional
18 development and talk a little bit about what
19 makes high-quality professional help. The
20 report of the National Reading Panel, this is
21 a section that got ignored, but reviewed all
22 of the research in professional development

1 for reading.

2 For several years after that, a
3 student of mine and I were supported by the
4 Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory
5 to continue that review. What we found is
6 there is very little attention to student
7 outcomes, and that was a problem in the
8 research base. But there are three criteria
9 that we have to worry about in professional
10 development that very often don't get attended
11 to.

12 No. 1, if you do professional
13 development, it means that you need to change
14 teacher knowledge. If you do whatever we call
15 professional development and teachers don't
16 learn something, there is nothing beyond that.
17 They will continue to do what they do.

18 But they also need to take that
19 knowledge and implement it somehow. And then,
20 we have got to worry about the student
21 outcomes because we could have those first two
22 conditions being met and students not

1 succeeding. We need to do all three of those,
2 and we need to do that evaluation of
3 professional development as a routine rather
4 than the "Did you like it?" kind of evaluation
5 that we do. "Did you find this useful?"
6 Everybody says yes. Everybody heads for the
7 door at two o'clock, and they don't actually
8 spend the time that they need in learning.

9 I think that we need to worry
10 about embedded professional development in
11 each of the disciplines, so that we can't have
12 a general discipline-free professional
13 development, except for a few topics. But we
14 really need to focus on getting teachers
15 comfortable with the idea that they can teach
16 kids to read in their content areas. Once
17 they do, their jobs become easier because they
18 don't have to stand in front of the class and
19 read the books to the students, the textbooks.

20 Here are just some other things.
21 You have seen some of this. Differentiated
22 professional development is important. Novice

1 teachers need a different kind of professional
2 development from experienced teachers. A good
3 proposal ought to cover that kind of
4 condition. Any sort of induction program
5 ought to be different from that provided for
6 experienced teachers.

7 It ought to be comprehensive. In
8 other words, you ought to have professional
9 development that is both schoolwide,
10 systemwide, districtwide, whatever it is that
11 you have control over, because we need to keep
12 this going. It needs to be continuous as
13 well.

14 And the most important thing as a
15 researcher, I am going to say, is that it has
16 to be research-based. And very often, we get
17 the personal opinion kind of professional
18 development. "I like this." I have sat in
19 any number of presentations and cringed at the
20 suggestions which go counter to the research
21 base that we have.

22 Let me turn a little bit, I would

1 love to spend the rest of the time talking
2 about instruction in professional development,
3 but, then, let me talk about a couple of other
4 issues that are equally important.

5 And so, here's this question about
6 universal design and, then, another one about
7 using technology with limited-English-
8 proficient children and youth, and children
9 and youth with disabilities.

10 I want to make sure that everybody
11 understands we aren't putting second language
12 learners and disabilities together as
13 populations. They are just two separate
14 populations.

15 But, in fact, the principles of
16 universal design are a set of concepts, ideas,
17 programming techniques, and computer-assisted
18 text displays that give access to the text for
19 students who can't access traditional print.

20 So, for example, you might have
21 the text being read to you with a screen
22 reader. You might have definitions being

1 provided, if you needed it. You might have
2 translations being provided, if you needed
3 those.

4 So, this is really an important
5 issue in terms of making text accessible to
6 all students in an ideal way. But I want to
7 go beyond that for technology.

8 There are some uses of technology
9 that we can't avoid; they need to be included
10 in specific instructional modules in all
11 programs up and down the line. Many of the
12 new standards do that. I suspect that the
13 Common Core has less of that technology
14 emphasis for my taste, but, then, that's my
15 specialty. So, I always like to see more.

16 But we have to do that. We can't
17 ignore teaching students how to read
18 critically on the internet, how to do searches
19 on the internet, how to use those resources
20 online in principled ways.

21 The number of times students get
22 caught cheating -- I don't know if you have

1 seen these latest statistics -- cutting and
2 pasting things from the internet or from
3 Wikipedia, or whatever, just simply putting
4 that as their own work. We need to make sure
5 that we actually do those kinds of things.

6 I can't imagine teaching writing
7 without using word processing these days. It
8 is just, if I said that 10 years ago, people
9 would have kind of guffawed. I can't even
10 imagine that that would be successful. And
11 it's one of the few tools that matches the
12 theoretical part of process writing almost
13 piece for piece. So, I think we need to deal
14 with that as well.

15 Again, let me repeat what I
16 started this with is that, for 21st century
17 skills, we really need more 19th and 20th
18 century skills than we ever thought possible.
19 We can't shortchange traditional reading and
20 writing.

21 So, here is a summary of all of
22 that. I want to add one more piece to this.

1 These are really important kinds of things.

2 But it turns out that we have had very little
3 success in using computers to teach reading,
4 and it is an entire agent. So, these global
5 programs just to teach reading have not been
6 very successful. There are several large-
7 scale studies that show that, and repeatedly
8 the evidence is very slim.

9 But where computers are useful in
10 instruction is as supplemental kinds of
11 things. It is one more way to leverage
12 instructional time.

13 Okay. So, what kind of evidence
14 do we need to have? One of the things, I have
15 reviewed proposals from states for all sorts
16 of things before, from state departments of
17 education and the like. And one of the things
18 that is almost always missing is the evidence
19 that you have the capacity or will develop the
20 capacity to implement and conduct the program
21 the way it has been proposed.

22 Because of that, I think that is

1 the first kind of evidence, that there needs
2 to be some infrastructure. There needs to be
3 a plan for completing and to show that they
4 can actually be implemented.

5 The major place that I would look
6 for that is that there's a large body of work
7 on reading. And, in particular, IES has been
8 just relentless in putting together large-
9 scale studies of programs. We have some that
10 actually show negative effect sizes, and yet
11 I run into schools that are adopting them
12 brand-new. Now that means that, if we left
13 those kids alone, they would be better off
14 than if we gave them the program.

15 Without making major
16 modifications, programs that don't work should
17 not be adopted. And the plan for making those
18 modifications, if you want to adopt something,
19 needs to be included in proposals.

20 So, No. 1 is a review of that kind
21 of research that we know is out there and that
22 tells us about the effectiveness of particular

1 interventions, particularly at the adolescent
2 level, but all the way down through
3 elementary. We need to have and we need to
4 have evidence that there's some modification
5 if you want to pursue that program.

6 Now one of the things that happens
7 is everybody out there in the world says, no,
8 that study didn't match my population. Well,
9 let's see exactly what that means and what
10 your plans are for modifying it to make it
11 match your population. So, I think that is an
12 important piece.

13 There we go. Okay. And then,
14 what strategies to evaluate and monitor the
15 job.

16 I gave you the three criteria for
17 professional development before. I don't know
18 that I need to do that.

19 But one important thing here is,
20 when I am asked to do professional development
21 work, I really insist that administrators
22 participate as well. I just don't want to

1 waste the time in dealing only with the
2 teaching staff and then not having a
3 supportive administrative or an institutional
4 memory when the principal leaves and a new
5 principal comes that just throws out
6 everything that we have done. So, the easy
7 way to address that, not easy but at least a
8 convenient way to address that, is simply to
9 go through and say, okay, everybody
10 participates.

11 It has got to be evaluated. I
12 already said that. It has got to be aligned
13 with the curriculum and the needs of the
14 teachers. In much the way that I talked about
15 earlier, it has got to be differentiated. And
16 it has got to be schoolwide. You can't have
17 a few people wanting to have one kind of
18 professional development and then another one,
19 unless their needs are specifically addressed
20 by those different professional development
21 opportunities.

22 And now here's the tough one:

1 evaluation has always been the stepchild of
2 educational implementation. And I don't think
3 that is going to change much here. So, what
4 should you require? Well, for my money, that
5 is the only way that you are going to get
6 success.

7 And I would point to at least one
8 of my favorite programs, because I have worked
9 with it so long, is the Early Childhood
10 Educator Professional Development Program from
11 the Department, which actually mandated that
12 we do experimental or quasi-experimental
13 evaluations.

14 So, my suggestion is that we not
15 do blanket adoptions or blanket
16 implementations, but we do this as staggered
17 implementations, accompanied by appropriate
18 sorts of evaluations that allow us to make the
19 conclusions about whether or not those
20 programs are working, coupled with forming the
21 evaluation to change those programs in ways
22 that will make them better and improve them

1 over the course of time.

2 Given the funding issue, you know,
3 there's just some real tough choices here.

4 But there is a network of the Regional
5 Educational Laboratories and the Comprehensive
6 Centers that are tasked with cooperating with
7 states to do just these kinds of evaluations.
8 And the proposals ought to make use of those
9 kinds of things.

10 And I would suggest that, in
11 addition, there are lots of eager professors
12 at universities who would love to have sites
13 to do research that they are interested in.
14 That is another kind of cooperative effort.

15 So, here are the major themes, as
16 I said:

17 We need to have research-based
18 programs. We need to pay strict attention to
19 that research. And if there's anything, that
20 is the No. 1 issue.

21 We need to have an alignment of
22 interventions, so that we don't adopt a lot of

1 programs that actually fight with each other.
2 Some of them actually try to do different
3 things in the opposite.

4 We need high-quality professional
5 development. We need rigorous evaluation, and
6 we need to incorporate technology as
7 appropriate.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 DR. STRICKLAND: Thank you,
11 Professor.

12 I would like to now introduce
13 Professor Nonie Lesaux, who is a Marie and Max
14 Kargman Associate Professor in Human
15 Development and Urban Education Advancement at
16 Harvard Graduate School of Education.

17 She leads a research program that
18 focuses on increasing opportunities to learn
19 for students from diverse linguistic,
20 cultural, and economic backgrounds, a growing
21 population in today's classrooms.

22 From 2002 to 2006, Lesaux was the

1 Senior Research Associate at the National
2 Literacy Panel on Language, Minority Children
3 and Youth.

4 In 2007, Lesaux was named one of
5 the five WT Grant Scholars, earning a
6 \$350,000, five-year award from the WT Grant
7 Foundation in support of her research on
8 English language learners in urban public
9 schools.

10 In 2009, she was recipient of the
11 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists
12 and Engineers, the highest honor given by the
13 United States Government to young
14 professionals beginning their independent
15 research careers.

16 Her studies in reading and
17 vocabulary development, as well as
18 instructional strategies to prevent reading
19 difficulties, have implications for
20 practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.
21 This research is supported by grants from
22 several organizations, including the Institute

1 of Education Services, the Eunice Kennedy
2 Shriver National Institute of Child Health and
3 Human Development, the William and Flora
4 Hewlett Foundation, and the Council of the
5 Great City Schools.

6 A native of Canada, Lesaux earned
7 her doctorate in educational psychology and
8 special education from the University of
9 British Columbia.

10 Thank you.

11 DR. LESAUX: Thank you. Good
12 morning, and thank you for the invitation.

13 I am going to spend a little time
14 kind of shifting gears towards thinking about
15 a particular population of learners that we
16 might really be attending to as we think
17 through this Striving Readers Program. So, I
18 am going to talk a little about this notion of
19 the 21st century America, just who the
20 children in our communities and schools are
21 today, what we know about their reading
22 development, and what that means as far as

1 pressing issues that we need to address via
2 such programs and policies, and can we link
3 what it is we know to what it is we do.

4 So, I am going to start just by
5 ensuring that we are all on the same page,
6 that really linguistic and cultural diversity
7 is inherent in our children today. We have
8 over 400 languages in the U.S. By 2050, it is
9 projected we will be looking at about 35
10 percent of the population in the country from
11 immigrant families. And that is a large and
12 fast-growing group.

13 What I want to be very clear about
14 in terms of this Striving Readers Program from
15 birth to 12th grade is that our largest and
16 fastest-growing group of children from
17 immigrant families are actually U.S.-born.
18 They are born here. They are being served in
19 our communities through our health and human
20 services and our education systems.

21 So, we think a little less about
22 these particular groups of, say, the small

1 groups of newcomers. We think about them
2 certainly in the design of effective policies
3 and practices, but we think a lot about the
4 students, the children who are enrolling in
5 our preschools, who are into kindergarten who
6 are reclassified as fully English-proficient
7 by first and second grade and going up through
8 the ranks. That is our largest and fastest-
9 growing group, which has real policy
10 implications.

11 So, we think a lot about cultural,
12 linguistic, and economic diversity as a
13 reality, that in these applications we ought
14 not to see a section on how we are going to
15 deal with our linguistic diversity, but,
16 rather, we see linguistic and cultural
17 diversity, economic diversity as really a
18 trail and a thread running right through the
19 application.

20 I will note that this year, in
21 fact, sadly, we have our highest rate of child
22 poverty that we have had in 20 years currently

1 in 2010. So, we are thinking a lot about all
2 settings and all programs rather than certain
3 subpopulations.

4 And what is that we are learning
5 from recent research on this group of children
6 from economic- and linguistically-diverse
7 backgrounds? Let me run you through very
8 quickly three studies that I think really
9 represent trends that are out there across the
10 country and that ought to be acknowledged and
11 embedded in these proposals.

12 So, the first is one study where
13 we have followed a group of U.S.-born children
14 of Latino immigrants who we recruited from
15 Head Start programs in 2001. They are
16 currently in the eighth grade. We have been
17 following them since they were age 4. Let me
18 show you their trend very quickly, for those
19 of you who think a lot about reading.

20 The black line is the national
21 norm for letter/word identification, which is
22 their ability to crack the code and read

1 words. And you can see that their skills in
2 the blue line map directly onto national
3 modeling norms. But, actually, they started
4 out below where we would place a native
5 English speaker, which makes very good sense
6 because, of course, these are second language
7 learners. We are not going to hold them to
8 anything early on.

9 In fact, their rates of growth
10 well surpassed the national norm. So, these
11 are children who are really benefitting from
12 the curriculum and, in fact, growing at really
13 fast rates. So, their ability to read the
14 words is totally typical.

15 Where we get the real gap is, of
16 course, is the word knowledge. So, you will
17 see here we start out with this gap in English
18 vocabulary, which obviously makes sense. At
19 age 4, they are going to have fewer English
20 words than their native English-speaking
21 counterparts. But you will see that the gap
22 persists all the way through, in this case

1 this is fifth grade. These data are in press.
2 We could show you these data right up through
3 the end of seventh grade.

4 What's disconcerting to me when I
5 look at this trend is that, in fact, here
6 again, their rates of growth surpass the
7 national norm. They are growing at a faster
8 rate in their language skills than their
9 native English-speaking peers.

10 The problem is it would need to be
11 even faster to close those gaps. But it also
12 suggests that we ought to design the
13 environment a little differently to capitalize
14 on this learning ability, that what we have
15 here is no problem at all with the ability to
16 learn those words, but now we have got to do
17 something so that we are not creating this
18 mismatch.

19 And so, what we get with this
20 sample, for example, is that by the end of
21 fifth grade they have vocabulary and
22 comprehension scores in around the 17th

1 percentile. Okay? End of middle school, 17
2 percentile in reading comprehensive and
3 English vocabulary places at exceptional risk
4 to not be able to complete high school.

5 Yet, these are, again, recruited
6 from Head Start's 2001, U.S.-born population,
7 come up through the system. Attendance looks
8 pretty good. We have looked at all kinds of
9 other variables. Ultimately, what we need to
10 think through is the design of that learning
11 environment for these students.

12 These students are also in
13 settings that are predominantly serving
14 children like them. So, we ought to think
15 more universally about that.

16 If we take it to a different study
17 and we look at a sample we followed similarly
18 from fourth through eighth grade, U.S.-born
19 and educated in this case on the West Coast --
20 the last study was here on the East Coast --
21 we find the very same pattern. By the end of
22 eighth grade, we get this tremendous gap

1 between the ability to read the words
2 accurately and efficiently and having the word
3 knowledge to support comprehension.

4 So, here's a sample that is
5 leaving eighth grade with reading
6 comprehension scores in around the 25th
7 percentile, U.S.-born, U.S.-educated, leaving
8 middle school around the 25th percentile in
9 comprehension. And the game is only going to
10 get more difficult at the level of language of
11 text.

12 When we did this work, the last
13 data I want to show you is actually that, when
14 we do this work and compare their profiles,
15 the language minority learners' profiles to
16 those of their native English speakers in the
17 very same classrooms who are similarly
18 struggling, we actually get the very same
19 profile, right? So, there's a point at which,
20 by the middle and high school, what we are
21 really talking about is the academic language,
22 the register, the language of text. These are

1 all students with excellent conversational and
2 basic communication skills; no question.

3 And just to push on that a little
4 bit more, we just recently conducted a study
5 with a subsample from the longitudinal study
6 I showed you first. And here is the further
7 dilemma: when they talk to us about their
8 reading strategies after we administer a
9 passage and some questions, they are certainly
10 active comprehenders in a sense. They are
11 talking about their strategies. They have
12 clearly reasoned processes for finding
13 information.

14 The problem is, if you don't bring
15 enough background knowledge to that passage to
16 begin with, if you don't have a good sense of
17 the rainforest, then your strategies that you
18 are applying are not so helpful because you
19 are looking without enough of a mental model
20 of that text.

21 So, we think about strategies as a
22 great mechanism for leveraging background

1 knowledge, but without the background
2 knowledge, we find that, of course, the
3 strategies are applied and used in ways that
4 are not particularly helpful.

5 The other thing that we have been
6 thinking a lot about in terms of these
7 environments is actually the quality of the
8 language that is used in the settings. So,
9 one of the things we are finding -- this is
10 from research, an IES-funded study, thousands
11 of hours of videotape.

12 What we have been doing is coding,
13 actually, for the quality of the language in
14 their classrooms. So, we think a lot about
15 not just children's profiles, but in this case
16 we coded quality of teachers' input.

17 And of course, what we are finding
18 is real significant variation in the
19 sophisticated language use that is out there.
20 So that, in the absence of even any
21 intervention or special program, we have kids,
22 for example, in this study who are exposed to

1 50 percent less of sophisticated language than
2 a student who might be in a classroom next
3 door. And, lo and behold, of course, when we
4 model the impact of just the kinds of inputs
5 that these children are receiving, we find it
6 has tremendous impact on their end-of-year
7 reading comprehension and vocabulary scores.

8 So, even in a middle school
9 setting where they may have that teacher just
10 90 minutes a day, in fact, the magnitude, the
11 effects are actually the same and/or larger
12 than some of the effects that researchers get
13 in trying to intervene. So, we sort of see,
14 we are thinking a lot about elevating the bar,
15 the oral language bar, for both students and
16 the adults in the buildings because there is
17 a lot of incidental learning that goes on just
18 by being immersed in a high-quality language
19 environment.

20 So, what does all this mean for
21 how we might think, then, about striving
22 readers with the linguistically-, culturally-,

1 economically-diverse populations who are out
2 there? How we link what it is we know to what
3 it is we do?

4 Well, I am going to take a minute
5 and talk sort of about four areas that I think
6 are particularly important with this
7 population in the mind.

8 The first is that the programs
9 themselves and the supports that are designed
10 have sufficient intensity to meet readers'
11 needs. And by that, I mean particularly in
12 the birth to 5 and in the community literacy
13 world, we have a lot of excellent models as
14 far as their design.

15 But in their implementation, it is
16 too light a touch. There are light-touch
17 models. We have great examples of mothers
18 being sent home with good information from the
19 hospital about talking to their baby and young
20 child, but that is the end of that service.

21 We have great examples of
22 community literacy programs that may only run

1 once a month. We have all kinds of examples
2 where, in fact, the design is there, but the
3 duration and the intensity lacks to really
4 gain enough traction to change behaviors
5 around literacy and to elevate the quality of
6 language environments.

7 So, we think a lot about, also,
8 that in many cases the funding mechanism is
9 for reach. How many families can we hit or
10 touch? And in fact, what we want to do is
11 slow down and make sure that we are actually
12 having an impact, reallocate for depth, and
13 then take it to scale.

14 Because the danger is that
15 families like it, children like it, but in the
16 end is it adding up to change language and
17 literacy outcomes? So, we think a lot about
18 intensity, duration, and scope.

19 Similarly, we hear a lot about
20 supplemental supports that are short-term that
21 may not be very closely matched to deal with
22 the instructional content. So, for those of

1 you who have worked with the struggling
2 readers out there, you know that different
3 adults are selecting different plans, and
4 different domains are focused on throughout
5 the day. In fact, some of our striving
6 readers have the most chaotic instructional
7 experience. So, we need to think through, how
8 do we get a closer match between our
9 supplemental supports and daily instruction
10 and intervention?

11 We have heard about this already
12 this morning, but we have a tendency to say
13 here are the kids who are struggling on the
14 State Standards Test, and here's what they're
15 all going to get. And frankly, you know, I
16 don't need to say much more after Michael
17 Kamil's presentation, but an adolescent reader
18 may be struggling with comprehension for very
19 different reasons than their peer. And so, we
20 need to think carefully about that match as
21 well.

22 Increasing opportunities to learn

1 also means we need to think about summer. So,
2 we would like to see some of these plans talk
3 about ways in which they may increase
4 opportunities to learn throughout the summer,
5 buffering that summer learning loss, and
6 generating closer connections to after-school
7 programs. Many of these students do attend
8 after-school programs. In many cases, status
9 quo would say that it is a lost opportunity to
10 keep building on knowledge and skills.

11 Second is this notion of
12 knowledge-based literacy instruction. So, if
13 we go back to the profiles of our readers
14 whose rates of growth are very good, who are
15 reading the words on the page, who have some
16 sense of how they are going to go through and
17 find information and text, and who can talk
18 about their strategies, what we are really
19 talking about to address their needs is to
20 focus more on their knowledge and to think
21 about knowledge-based literacy instruction.

22 So, as we think about these

1 smaller problem spaces and these larger ones,
2 what we are really talking about with the
3 larger problem space is this building up
4 background knowledge.

5 So, rather than necessarily -- you
6 know, we have this sense that we want to talk
7 about the pendulum or the way that we are
8 thinking about the design of assessment and
9 services, and we tend to want to think about
10 the code and the early skills. We know that
11 what they are struggling with later is more in
12 the critical thinking, academic vocabulary,
13 conceptual knowledge world.

14 And rather than sort of talk about
15 this balanced instruction and try to find a
16 balanced model, what we are really talking is
17 anchoring all of that instruction in big
18 ideas, in abstract concepts, in academic
19 language. So that we are not looking for
20 plans that suggest "And here will be our time
21 for word reading, and here will be our time
22 for comprehension, and here will be our time

1 for vocabulary."

2 What we are really looking for is
3 here are the big ideas and the units and the
4 concepts that are going to guide our study.
5 So, we are going to think about reading
6 instruction as studying concepts, and within
7 that, we are going to do some really good
8 phonics work and some really good
9 comprehension work.

10 So, what we end up with is reading
11 instruction in the service of content learning
12 rather than in the service of reading skills.
13 And what we often see in proposals for
14 struggling readers is a real skills-based kind
15 of approach.

16 And what we want to do is move
17 much more, and this is certainly in line with
18 the Common Core Standards, what we really want
19 to do is really push on content, and that our
20 vocabulary work is just tied to the big idea
21 and the concept under study, as is our phonics
22 work, as is our high school work on the

1 listening and speaking standards, where we're
2 going to do some dialog and debate and
3 discourse.

4 So, we are trying to move away
5 from these pieces of literacy instruction to
6 a much more content-driven approach in which
7 you then gain language and literacy skills.

8 So, it means, also, that we are
9 going to have to have an increase in
10 opportunities for academic and productive talk
11 beyond providing responses. To change those
12 trajectories that I started with, kids are
13 absolutely going to have to talk a lot more
14 than they do. It is going to have to be much
15 more planned. It is going to have to be
16 extended in nature. They are going to have to
17 have dialog and discourse. One cannot reason
18 through big ideas and build their language
19 skills without the opportunity to do just
20 that.

21 And in fact, just back to what
22 makes good writing, some of what makes good

1 writing is good opportunities to discuss and
2 plan. We are going to have to move more
3 quickly from conversational supports to
4 academic language supports. They are going to
5 get those basic communication skills
6 incidentally. They are going to pick those up
7 over time. They are U.S.-born; they are here.
8 The day-to-day conversation comes.

9 What they are not getting is the
10 academic language. That requires significant
11 instruction. Even for our newcomer ELLs, we
12 are going to have to move quickly from basic
13 and survival English to academic language.

14 But it means that educators and
15 children need the big ideas to talk about. It
16 needs to be anchored in text. It needs to be
17 anchored in some abstract concepts.

18 So, for example, here we might
19 think about this approach as one starts with
20 a big idea or question, and all of the kinds
21 of literacy sorts of work, whether it is for
22 young children or older children, falls in and

1 around that. So, it is thematic and it is
2 content-based.

3 It certainly aligns very much with
4 the Common Core Standards, where we are
5 pushing on both the reading blocks and our
6 English language arts classrooms to be much
7 more driven by content.

8 Let me say two other things. The
9 adults roles in capacity-building, we have
10 heard a lot about already this morning. So,
11 I am not going to say too much.

12 But, of course, with this
13 population in mind, it is no longer feasible
14 to rely on a specialist or specialization
15 model. So, in those plans, we ought to see
16 lots of discussion about building capacity
17 across the system rather than specialized
18 roles for people to serve our English language
19 learners.

20 Incidentally, that model has been
21 historically fairly inefficient and
22 ineffective. It is an expensive route, even

1 in the special education world. It has been
2 a very expensive route with not a lot of
3 return.

4 It means we are going to have to
5 expand professional education. We have heard
6 more about that. But even in our after-school
7 and family literacy programs, we are going to
8 want to push on these ideas around oral
9 language and complex concepts and elevating
10 the bar.

11 And finally, Michael already
12 mentioned it, but we are going to have to
13 foster the site-level instructional
14 leadership, clear roles for administrators in
15 managing diversity and elevating the bar
16 around literacy and language.

17 And finally, I want to just say a
18 few things about assessment. So, first is in
19 many cases, of course, we all know that the
20 first statewide indicator of reading
21 comprehension levels is often at the third
22 grade, which is exceptionally late to find out

1 there are these strugglers who need it.

2 Our early literacy assessments
3 that are implemented out there are mostly
4 code-based. So, we also have, again, those
5 students in all of those students would have
6 looked very good on the average early literacy
7 assessment. They would have their letters.
8 They have their sounds, et cetera.

9 So, even starting assessments at
10 pre-K, however, is late. So, we are thinking
11 a lot in some of the State work I am doing
12 with Massachusetts, we are thinking a lot
13 about partnerships with community and medical
14 providers, health and human services. There
15 are a lot of touchpoints, especially with
16 immigrant families, long before children get
17 to school, opportunities to have more
18 conversation and gain more information about
19 language development and milestones.

20 Finally, I just want to talk a
21 little about the importance of assessing not
22 just children, but the quality of the settings

1 that they are in. The only way that we are
2 going to shift practices and shift
3 professional development and emphasis on what
4 it is we are providing to kids is if we start
5 measuring setting-level issues. And
6 certainly, with these learners in mind, we
7 absolutely need to do that.

8 And ideally, the state would put
9 forth some sort of sense that there is going
10 to be a statewide database where we can
11 actually track kids over time, and several
12 states have done this recently.

13 So, ultimately, increased
14 intensity, this knowledge-based literacy
15 instruction, assessments before school begins,
16 and assessment systems that have a real focus
17 on oral language. For our ELLs, we are really
18 talking about opportunities to build oral
19 language skills in many more ways than the
20 basic language and a formal plan, even for
21 continued support for those who are
22 reclassified.

1 It is very clear that
2 classification at the primary grade is not a
3 very good predictor of academic success later.
4 So, we are really back to that universal
5 design for learning.

6 Thank you very much.

7 (Applause.)

8 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Thank
9 you very much.

10 Thank you, panelists. Thank you
11 for the information. We really appreciate it.

12 I think it is time, we are running
13 a little late, so we might just have time for
14 a couple of questions at this point.

15 You know, something that is part
16 of our theory of actions is looking at the
17 role that data plays in, one, tracking how
18 students are doing. And we talked a little
19 bit about that. Also, how it informs
20 instruction, more importantly.

21 When we look at data, whether it
22 is formal or informal assessments, what role

1 do you see? We talked a little bit about it
2 as well in informing professional development
3 and also keeping sort of a level of
4 accountability.

5 What role do you see the states in
6 developing that sort of system? And what role
7 do you see LEAs in developing that system?
8 And that's open.

9 DR. STRICKLAND: I think that the
10 state needs to be sure that whatever the
11 subgrantees, the LEAs, include in their
12 proposal really has both. What I would like
13 to see is formative assessment linked to some
14 of it.

15 And just a minute of background:
16 I am very upset about the amount of test-
17 taking, mindless test-taking practice that I
18 see going on, especially with kids who are
19 considered striving readers and writers, in
20 poor communities, minority communities. It is
21 just a total waste of time and there's no
22 teaching going on. The kids do page 15 and

1 16. They do terribly on it, and the teacher
2 says, "Pay attention. Try harder." So, they
3 do 19 and 20, and what they are learning is "I
4 can't do this, and I couldn't do it yesterday
5 and I probably won't be able to do it
6 tomorrow."

7 I would like to have a big
8 bonfire. Any publishers in the room here?
9 I'm probably in big trouble.

10 But there are ways to have
11 formative assessments linked to standards
12 where children are involved in doing the kinds
13 of things that are on the summative, and I am
14 thinking mainly of constructive response, for
15 example, and writing on demand, but
16 constructive response and writing on demand
17 that relates to the content under study, the
18 inquiry kinds of projects, and so on, that
19 they are working on, whether they are doing it
20 through technology or whether they are just
21 doing it with a yellow pad, but they have to
22 think in the ways that the Common Core

1 Standards requires them to do.

2 This way, they are practicing the
3 format of the summative, but they are dealing
4 with the content and the standards that are in
5 play right at the time when they are needed.
6 I really would love to see that in somebody's
7 plan. This is a serious problem.

8 DR. KAMIL: This has to be at the
9 state level, and it probably even needs to go
10 beyond the state border.

11 The one thing about striving
12 readers is that they are a highly-mobile
13 population. They move around a lot. We need
14 to keep track of where they are when they move
15 from school to school. I could bore you with
16 a lot of research horror stories where we have
17 tried to keep track of kids moving across
18 districts and schools.

19 That needs to be done, and you
20 need to have a very sophisticated system. But
21 you also need to have the right assessments
22 for the adolescent literacy focus. We just

1 don't have a lot of great assessments that do
2 anything except the word-level kinds of things
3 that you were talking about. And it only
4 helps about 20 percent of the struggling
5 readers, which, in turn, is about 20 percent.
6 So, it is a very small return, and yet we
7 continue to do that.

8 So, we need to begin to track
9 other things. And I like your list of what we
10 should track. But we need to develop those
11 assessments, and that needs to be done at the
12 state level, at the very least.

13 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Okay.
14 Do you have anything to add? Okay.

15 MR. YUDIN: Yes, I want to thank
16 you all. This was an incredibly useful and
17 productive hour or so. And I have 100
18 questions, but I probably have time for one.

19 (Laughter.)

20 Professors Strickland and Kamil,
21 you talked a lot about technology and using
22 technology in purposeful and strategic ways,

1 implying that it is really imperative that we
2 use it, but it has got to be carefully done.
3 I was wondering if you could kind of elaborate
4 on that.

5 DR. STRICKLAND: Okay. You fed
6 right into another concern that I have.

7 The consortia that are developing
8 the technology-based assessments for the
9 Common Core Standards are planning -- and I
10 have only read a little bit of the plan -- but
11 they are planning what they call adaptive
12 technologies in terms of the assessment. I
13 haven't seen them. They haven't been
14 developed yet.

15 But in keeping, again, with what
16 Michael is saying, I like to see adaptive
17 tests that are not just linear. Do you know
18 what I mean? So, the kid scores 25. It
19 doesn't mean you just move them down a notch
20 or move them, if they score high, you know,
21 move them up a notch.

22 Nonie talked about being more

1 targeted. I talked in more global ways. She
2 was more specific.

3 It is not just the score. But if
4 you are going to be adaptive, then you have to
5 develop technologies that really look and see
6 what it is this learner needs. We could get
7 the same score and have very different needs.

8 So, I would like to press for
9 these brilliant people who are working in
10 these consortia to think about. Everything
11 that I have read so far means that the
12 adaptations are going to be in some linear
13 way.

14 DR. KAMIL: No.

15 DR. STRICKLAND: They aren't?
16 Okay, Michael, if you would speak to that?

17 DR. KAMIL: That really was once
18 upon a time the way you did it. But now there
19 are all kinds of algorithms that you can use
20 to look at what pattern of errors students
21 make and adapt that way.

22 I don't want to prejudge that.

1 Those folks are just getting started. We
2 could do a lot of speculation.

3 But I want to go back to what I
4 said and reiterate. We can't ignore
5 technology. There are still some classrooms
6 that do.

7 We need to make sure -- and you
8 said it; I really like the way you said it --
9 we need to make sure that, whatever the
10 assessment is, it provides double-duty. So
11 that it is instructive as well as informative
12 in terms of having students do the kinds of
13 things that we want them to do in the real
14 world.

15 We could develop those
16 assessments, and I hope that those consortia
17 will do that. As I said, I don't want to
18 prejudge what they are doing or even predict
19 what their outcome is going to be.

20 But we need to begin to think
21 about this assessment, that we don't have
22 enough instructional techniques to match to

1 the fine distinctions that we can make in many
2 assessments. And so, we are developing very
3 sharp-edged assessments when sort of a butter
4 knife would do. And we only have a few
5 instructional techniques, and that is what we
6 have to think about. What different
7 instructional patterns could you fit on a
8 group of students based on the assessment?
9 And it is a lot smaller than the distinctions
10 we make.

11 DR. LESAUX: I was just going to
12 say the other way to think about technology
13 is, as we aim to sort of bring the world a
14 little bit more deliberately and planfully to
15 these learners, there is a lot of room to use
16 technology. So, if the challenge in the
17 science class is building up background
18 because it is hard to explain a glacier and
19 the way in which its thickness matters for the
20 speed at which it moves, then the videoclips
21 that are out there, whether it's National
22 Geographic or something else posted, those

1 kinds of things.

2 In our own intervention work, we
3 have students generating podcasts to talk
4 about a particular issue, to disseminate
5 knowledge. So, there's ways in which we can
6 be really planful and careful in our use of
7 technology.

8 The other thing is, as we aim to
9 build up background, there are ways in which
10 taking print out of the equation can be really
11 helpful to striving readers, of course. So,
12 in that sense, it is also very good.

13 DR. STRICKLAND: Can I make one
14 other point? I think that the stakes are very
15 high. They're very high.

16 These are the kids that can make
17 or break a teacher, a district, a school with
18 all that is riding on test scores these days.
19 So, that is what frightens me about the
20 potential for people to take the shortcut and
21 say, "We'll use this program to get test
22 scores." Yes, I'm for getting better test

1 scores, but can we do it in ways that truly do
2 build lifelong learners and readers?

3 I think we can do this, but we
4 have to be careful because folks out there are
5 worried about their jobs. This is tied to
6 teacher effectiveness, educator effectiveness.
7 I'm steeped into that literature right now.
8 So, if your job is on the line, sometimes the
9 thing that you think about doing is let's get
10 right to the test.

11 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Great.

12 Deborah, do you have a question?

13 MS. SPITZ: We talk a lot, with
14 this program being first to grade 12 and the
15 challenges that that brings, we talk a lot
16 about the importance of alignment.

17 Could you just sort of kind of sum
18 up, like what are the key elements of when we
19 talk about an aligned system? What are we
20 really talking about alignment?

21 DR. KAMIL: For me, the real key
22 in alignment is to figure out what goes on in

1 these bands that we have established. And you
2 could divide them up in slightly different
3 ways from the way they are divided up here,
4 but whatever they are, what has to happen, the
5 major piece of alignment is that the output of
6 one band has to be the input for the next
7 band.

8 So, somebody has got to think
9 about what teachers are producing at, say,
10 birth to 5 or birth to 3, and then 3 to K,
11 however you want to divide that up. But those
12 transitions really are what cause this
13 trouble.

14 So, we have a fourth grade slump
15 that really in many people's opinions does
16 affect the kind of text and the format for
17 teaching in text. And we don't consider that.
18 So, we don't change our reading instruction to
19 account for that transition. The same is true
20 for ninth grade as well, that it becomes a
21 more decontextualized kind of learning.

22 So, I think that is where I would

1 go and focus that effort right on those
2 transition points.

3 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Okay.
4 Well, thank you very much. Thank you so much
5 for your presentations and your thoughts and
6 your insights. We really appreciate it very
7 much.

8 So, what we are going to do next
9 is take a five-minute break, a quick five-
10 minute break.

11 (Laughter.)

12 And then, we will line up for the
13 public, for those that are preregistered. If
14 you don't know what number you are, please
15 check at the table outside.

16 So, we will be back in five
17 minutes.

18 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter
19 went off the record at 10:43 a.m. and went
20 back on the record at 10:53 a.m.)

21 MS. NEWSOME-JOHNSON: Okay. Why
22 don't we go ahead and get started?

1 Again, if you would like to submit
2 a document to us, please feel free to do that.

3 And we will start off with our
4 first speaker during our public meeting.

5 MR. GREENBERG: Hi. My name is
6 Stuart Greenberg. I'm with the Florida
7 Department of Education. We have combined the
8 Office of Early Learning and Just Read,
9 Florida!, which is our reading language/arts
10 literacy department.

11 I want to say, first, thank you
12 for the opportunity to come and speak and to
13 come and learn and listen.

14 As we think about the application,
15 there are a few things that we are doing in
16 one of our districts that is here today in
17 conjunction with districts. I think
18 everything needs to flow from the state to the
19 district in concert, and possibly in feeder
20 patterns.

21 When we hear about sustainability
22 and we think about mobility, we know that

1 students generally move but within the same
2 zip code often. So, if the application could
3 perhaps provide additional points for thought
4 into and articulation of feeder patterns in
5 large urban areas, and succinct birth to 12
6 grade in smaller areas.

7 And the second thing that we would
8 like the applications to focus on is a strong
9 focus on what should instruction look like,
10 very detailed by birth to 3, what does
11 language look like, and moving into pre-K all
12 the way up through high school, at the
13 elementary level in the classrooms. What does
14 instruction look like, not just in reading,
15 but in science and in social studies and in
16 math? And then, how does writing support
17 those skills?

18 Middle and high school content
19 area instruction is as important as intensive
20 intervention. Once students learn to read and
21 have those skills uplifted, how can we use
22 professional development with content area

1 classrooms, also in special area classrooms
2 with career ed technical teachers, so that
3 reading becomes purposeful and generalized
4 across the curriculum?

5 When we turn to professional
6 development, we think that is the key, and we
7 would look for professional development that
8 provides models and demonstration. So,
9 professional development should use
10 technology, but the technology should be
11 involved in the demonstration of lessons. We
12 would look for some kind of points for all
13 professional development being modeled and
14 demonstrated either in teachers' classrooms or
15 it must be with teachers' materials.

16 As we look to follow up on what
17 teachers do, we would like to see -- and we
18 are providing in our application, and we hope
19 that you would look at it very rigorously --
20 how teachers can self-evaluate: did they use
21 the practice that they were taught with kids?
22 And when administrators, who are part of staff

1 development, come back to look to look at
2 that, administrators can then use the same
3 type of evaluation instrument or feedback
4 instrument to teachers: what did you say you
5 used? What did I see you use?

6 And then, in Florida, we are
7 exploding with something called "Lesson
8 Study", where teachers design research lessons
9 and they come in and watch each other teach.
10 They look at student work. Lesson Study
11 becomes a perfect vehicle to look at what
12 teachers say they are doing, how they
13 differentiate it, what administrators see, and
14 as Dorothy mentioned, looking at student work.
15 That is the best evidence in how writing can
16 support that.

17 So, we look at this initiative as
18 something brand-new. I mean it is a
19 tremendous opportunity to go from birth to 12,
20 but the applications should focus on, we
21 believe: what does instruction look like?
22 What does professional development look like?

1 How do teachers provide their own feedback for
2 what they do? How do administrators at the
3 state level, at the local level, provide
4 feedback on going and looking at student work
5 to find the match between performance of
6 strategies and then the outcome?

7 Because we could see strategies
8 being used and students growing, but, then, we
9 can also determine how can we use other
10 classrooms to build background knowledge, to
11 build content area instruction, so that at the
12 end the gap isn't there, which provides a
13 strong, effective reliance on teaching and
14 using research-based, informed practices, both
15 through the findings of IES and professional
16 development.

17 But, again, we think that all this
18 should be wrapped into, the focus should be,
19 what does instruction look like and what
20 should the students be able to do,
21 instructing, reading across text, using
22 writing, and then having teachers evaluate

1 their practice, along with the outcome
2 assessment, but along the way we also know
3 that this needs to be timed for teachers.

4 When we ask teachers to
5 differentiate, they have to do that in all
6 content areas across all students. So,
7 looking at this across multiple years in a
8 feeder pattern rather than we must do all of
9 this work all at once, a sustained environment
10 for both the development of this initiative
11 and the use of the initiative, especially
12 looking at data from the state level.

13 So, again, I want to say thank
14 you for a wonderful opportunity, a brand-new
15 initiative focused on teaching and learning,
16 using what we know from science to bring
17 classrooms alive.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. WEBER: Good morning.

20 My name is Jennifer Weber, and I'm
21 with Nemours. We are a private foundation
22 that also operates a premiere children's

1 health system.

2 Because many of you might not be
3 familiar with it, I will just tell you a
4 little bit about it.

5 Our goal at Nemours is to help
6 children grow healthy. And that commitment
7 extends beyond work in the healthcare sector.
8 We have invested in early literacy in order to
9 help children become successful readers.

10 Nemours' BrightStart! was
11 established in 2005 in Florida to address
12 dyslexia at a very early age, and it is
13 targeted to pre-kindergartners and
14 kindergartners.

15 So, my comments today will focus
16 on that age group as well as the topics this
17 morning. We will submit written comments.

18 So, first, on the area of
19 professional development, we couldn't agree
20 more that professional development is critical
21 and have a couple of recommendations that we
22 want to put forward.

1 First, we really want to see joint
2 trainings for early childhood and early
3 elementary educators that gets at that
4 transition phase, too, but that subgrantees
5 should demonstrate a commitment and plan for
6 bringing together early childhood and early
7 elementary educators.

8 This training needs to develop a
9 mutual understanding of critical instructional
10 priorities and challenges at each age and
11 grade, and this broader sense of a shared
12 responsibility and accountability for long-
13 term childhood literacy outcomes.

14 Second, professional development
15 explicitly targeting critical literacy skills
16 and best instructional practices, so that
17 subgrantees demonstrate capacity to provide
18 high-quality professional development that
19 encompasses what to teach and how to teach.

20 Third, use of universal design for
21 learning and technology in professional
22 development. You know, educators are diverse

1 learners, too. And the use of high-quality
2 UDL will ensure that instructional techniques
3 are engaging and effective, and online
4 training options make training readily
5 available and cost-effective.

6 Fourth, appropriate assessment
7 system. Assessment should be tied closely to
8 critical early literacy skills. That research
9 has shown to be highly predictive of future
10 literacy success.

11 Ideally, classroom teachers should
12 be able to administer the assessment to
13 reinforce the skills of interest and to
14 administer -- excuse me -- administer it,
15 reinforce the skills of interest, and connect
16 the assessment to instruction, and be able to
17 do it multiple times throughout the year.

18 And then, fifth, timely access to
19 individual child and classroom-level results.
20 This is so important to help inform
21 instruction and help teachers be accountable.

22 On transition alignment, inclusion

1 of strategies targeted to pre-kindergarten and
2 kindergarten children at state and local
3 levels is critical to reading success. So, it
4 probably goes without saying we are concerned
5 about this 15 percent cap that has been built
6 into the program and encourage some creative
7 thinking about how to address that and not
8 instill additional silos into the reading
9 program.

10 We really encourage focusing on
11 age-appropriate strategies. You know, it is
12 estimated that up to 40 percent of children
13 enter kindergarten one or more years behind
14 their peers in critical language and reading
15 readiness. You know, it is too late if we
16 wait until third grade to see that they are
17 behind. We really need to invest early.

18 We also encourage this to look at
19 multi-sector public/private partnerships. We
20 are committed to this program, I know to early
21 literacy and investing in that, and I know
22 others are, too. And we really encourage

1 subgrantees to pursue partnerships throughout
2 the community.

3 Among one of the most important
4 lessons we have learned through our work with
5 Nemours' BrightStart! is the need to develop
6 strong, multi-sector public/private
7 partnerships. So that the interventions of
8 programs are pervasive in communities, they
9 tap community assets, and reach children and
10 families where they live, learn, play.

11 And identifying and funding and
12 sustaining these partnerships are critical to
13 achieving true innovation that leads to
14 lasting changes and sustainability.

15 And then just one comment on
16 evidence and evaluation. We really believe
17 states should require subgrantees to provide
18 evidence of their capacity to implement
19 innovative literacy programs that are tailored
20 to meet the assets and needs of their
21 community.

22 So, in closing, Nemours thanks the

1 U.S. Department of Education for the
2 opportunity to provide input on this program.
3 We believe that early identification for
4 individuals at risk of reading failure and
5 targeted, intensive intervention are of great
6 public interest, and that this grant program
7 has important potential for improving literacy
8 rates in these children.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. GILLIS: Good morning.

11 I'm Margie Gillis, Research
12 Affiliate from Haskins Laboratories in New
13 Haven, Connecticut, and President of Literacy
14 How.

15 I'm here today to speak to the
16 public question entitled "professional
17 development, instruction, and assessment", and
18 specifically speak about the essential
19 elements and components of high-quality
20 literacy-related professional development.

21 Since 2000, I have been integrally
22 involved with professional development efforts

1 in literacy instruction in Connecticut, first,
2 as a research fellow and literacy specialist
3 at Haskins Laboratories and, subsequently, as
4 the Director of the PD initiatives.

5 Our first project was a research
6 practice feasibility study with funding from
7 the U.S. Department of Ed. Researchers and
8 reading specialists with classroom experience
9 applied reading research in grade K-2
10 classrooms and trained over 30 mentors,
11 developing training models and tools for
12 teacher training, and establishing three
13 Connecticut model schools to serve as
14 demonstration sites.

15 As a followup to this study, we
16 formalized our training modules during a four-
17 year teacher quality grant funded by IES.
18 Acknowledging the fact that first grade
19 teachers' primary responsibility is to teach
20 children to read, this study, conducted in 120
21 classrooms in 37 schools, focused on first
22 grade reading instruction, studying the

1 relationship among what teachers know about
2 reading, how it's taught, and how students
3 perform.

4 When teachers were tested before
5 the professional development began, they knew
6 roughly 50 percent of the items that we tested
7 them on. Our findings were consistent with
8 other studies conducted across the U.S.
9 Teachers don't know what they don't know.

10 However, when taught essential
11 concepts with follow-up support and coaching
12 in the classroom, teachers transferred their
13 knowledge to the classroom, and students'
14 literacy skills improved.

15 Since that study was completed, we
16 have expanded our PD efforts to include pre-K
17 teachers to focus on prevention and early
18 intervention and on the other end of this
19 spectrum, with middle and high school
20 teachers, because many of those teachers'
21 classrooms are filled with students who are
22 reading and writing below grade level.

1 I also served on Connecticut's
2 Reading First Management Team for six years.
3 All teachers, especially those who work with
4 at-risk readers, must understand the reading
5 research well. They must know how to assess,
6 including word recognition, as well as
7 language comprehension, particularly to Dr.
8 Lesaux's point this morning, and how to select
9 appropriate interventions.

10 This body of knowledge is
11 extensive and complex, and our schools and
12 systems are not designed to provide teachers
13 with the kind of professional development that
14 will ensure mastery of this knowledge along
15 with skilled execution of research-grounded
16 strategies.

17 In 11 years, we have mentored more
18 than 600 teachers in over 100 Connecticut
19 schools. Based on these experiences and the
20 data that have been collected, I would suggest
21 the following:

22 Professional development should

1 focus on the research-based concepts and
2 evidence-based instruction rather than
3 programs. While teachers must understand how
4 the information presented in workshops can be
5 integrated into their core curriculum using an
6 RtI framework, they should also realize that
7 there is no perfect program. One size does
8 not fit all. They must learn to become
9 method-proof.

10 Principals must be fully vested in
11 this reading initiative. That means that, as
12 the instructional leader, they will commit to
13 releasing teachers from their classrooms, hold
14 teachers accountable for rigorous data-driven
15 instruction and implementation by monitoring
16 their instruction, and meet regularly with the
17 coach and the teachers on the teams.

18 All administrators must commit to
19 the initiative. This means everyone makes
20 this their first priority, signing agreements
21 stating they will attend all sessions, commit
22 to classroom assignments for the duration of

1 the grant, and meet with their colleagues.

2 It must be a minimum of three
3 years. It takes many years to turn around
4 schools. And these have to be sustainable and
5 long-term.

6 And just as teachers are held
7 accountable for their students' success, those
8 responsible for providing this PD will be
9 accountable for the success of the
10 initiatives. So, we must require schools to
11 select performance measures to gauge the
12 success of the initiative.

13 Rather than being pretty dull, I
14 would like the PD to embody the practice of
15 pedagogical discourse.

16 Thank you for your attention.

17 MR. CESARANO: I'm Michael
18 Cesarano from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. I
19 just have a few things.

20 I want to thank you first for
21 inviting us here. I, in my position, have an
22 opportunity to go and visit schools and,

1 actually, to the classroom level.

2 So, my first request is more of an
3 advocacy for them. And that is, as you
4 develop your requirements for this grant, if
5 you could include in that considerations that
6 they are also dealing with requirements for
7 other grants and other state and federal-level
8 requirements that are basically passed down to
9 them.

10 What they are dealing with is the
11 fact that, although they may want to pursue a
12 grant like this, it may actually have conflict
13 with other requirements that they are
14 presently under. And if that can be a
15 consideration, I know that it is a difficult
16 issue, but if that can be developed in a
17 manner so that they can work alongside or be
18 in addition to.

19 The second thing, also, is, as a
20 publisher, we have been providing professional
21 development to schools for probably as long as
22 we have been around. And also, we do use

1 teachers that are highly-certified, teachers
2 that are proven to be effective teachers. So,
3 we do consider ourselves a partner in
4 education with the LEAs and the schools.

5 And if the requirements for your
6 professional development and guidance are
7 included in the grant, we will be more than
8 happy to adapt what we provide, so that we can
9 provide it not only to the language arts
10 teachers, but, as you guys have already
11 identified, to the other core curriculum areas
12 as well.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MS. LANDESMAN RAMEY: Hello. I'm
15 Sharon Landesman Ramey, and I am from
16 Georgetown University, where I direct the
17 Center on Health and Education.

18 Three points: the first is I hope
19 when you finalize the guidelines for the
20 competition, you do whatever you can within
21 the constraints of the congressional
22 legislation to not pre-determine that every

1 subgrant within a state has a mandatory 15
2 percent for birth to 5; 40 percent, K to fifth
3 grade; 40 percent, sixth grade to twelve.

4 I think the idea that all ages are
5 vital to a successful birth-through-12 plan
6 should be underscored, and that the applicants
7 have to strongly defend where they are
8 strategically investing the federal dollars
9 based on need and the strengths of their local
10 and state programs. So, I would like to avoid
11 a prescriptive percentage that doesn't take
12 into account particular needs and strengths.

13 No. 2, I think that the federal
14 government is awfully good at having influence
15 through very cohesive and strong documents
16 that invite applications. And you have an
17 amazing opportunity to influence and inspire
18 our states by identifying core resource
19 documents that summarize the research.

20 You have invested, for example, in
21 a decade of research projects on early
22 educator professional development. Summarize

1 what you have learned, tell them the
2 documents, and in your Request for
3 Applications have them refer to those
4 documents, or if they are proposing something
5 not endorsed by the documents, especially
6 something counter to what's recommended, they
7 have to defend it, as to why they are not
8 doing what the research synthesis shows.

9 And thirdly, I would like
10 evaluation to be elevated. Evaluation is
11 still the "gotcha" tool. It is still all the
12 high-stakes testing, all the negative stuff
13 that comes.

14 I mean, what if this weren't
15 called the Comprehensive Literacy Program --
16 and I am not suggesting renaming -- but what
17 if it were called the Comprehensive
18 Continuously Evaluated Literacy Program? It
19 wouldn't be an after-thought. It wouldn't be
20 something that, when you turn in your final
21 report, you get it or you just hire some
22 company and pay them a little bit, and they'll

1 write you the report.

2 I would like the idea of data-
3 driven decisions, collecting data on students,
4 classrooms, teachers, principals, center
5 directors, to really be elevated and for
6 applicants to be held accountable. And I hope
7 that you will make it so that the data
8 collected from every state that gets one of
9 these awards quickly enters the public domain,
10 so we can really build.

11 We have too many examples where we
12 invest a quarter of a billion dollars
13 -- that's what we're looking at, or maybe more
14 because of what states contribute -- and 10
15 years down the road we haven't learned
16 anything. So, please elevate the evaluation.

17 Thank you.

18 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: That's
19 it. Deborah, did you want to close up and
20 sort of give us the next steps?

21 Again, on my behalf, thank you
22 very much for joining us today. Thank you.

1 MS. SPITZ: Thank you very much.

2 We had fewer public speakers than
3 we had planned on. So, we have a little bit
4 of time.

5 Is there anyone who wanted to make
6 a public comment that didn't? I will offer
7 that up as an opportunity.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are you still
9 having the afternoon session?

10 MS. SPITZ: We are, and we are
11 going to break for what is now an extended
12 lunch.

13 I also wanted, if the panelists
14 don't mind, if there is anyone out there that
15 has a question, we hadn't thought we would
16 have time to have the panel answer any
17 questions. But if people have a question, and
18 I think one of my colleagues does, if the
19 panel wouldn't mind being given a question or
20 two?

21 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Two
22 questions, I think.

1 MS. SPITZ: Oh, yes, and, Dr.
2 Melendez, if you had any follow-up
3 questions --

4 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Oh,
5 no.

6 MR. D'EMILIO: Thanks. This is an
7 excellent panel, and I want to take advantage
8 of the opportunity to dig in a little bit more
9 about zero to 5 and the role that you perceive
10 parents can play, especially parents or
11 caregivers or siblings and grandmothers in the
12 home where the language isn't English. But
13 all groups, how do parents play a role? How
14 would you specify that in the application?

15 DR. MELENDEZ DE SANTA ANA: Could
16 you state your name for the panel? I know who
17 you are, but --

18 (Laughter.)

19 MR. D'EMILIO: Timothy D'Emilio,
20 Office of English Language Acquisition.

21 DR. STRICKLAND: You know, when
22 you mentioned grandparents, that's close to my

1 heart for a lot of reasons. But one is the
2 fact that many of these children are being
3 raised by a grandparent.

4 So, whoever the caregiver is needs
5 to be brought into the equation, no question
6 about that. And there are ways to do this by
7 embracing the parent as a part of the whole
8 process, rather than to suggest that there's
9 something wrong, that we need to fix you.

10 So, the professional development
11 for the educators will really have to focus
12 on, how do we not only reach out, how do we
13 keep parents engaged in the process? The
14 relationship between -- well, everybody in
15 this room knows this -- the language of the
16 home in those very early years and the
17 achievement beyond is just startling.
18 Whenever you see those statistics, they stay
19 in your mind for weeks and weeks and weeks.

20 So that, getting them started,
21 helping educators know how to get them in and
22 how to do things with parents that have

1 lasting impact will be very important. And
2 there's literature out there on this. There's
3 no question about it.

4 DR. KAMIL: I want to go a little
5 further. And that is, we need professional
6 development for these parents. It is a funny
7 way to talk about it, but we need to actually
8 teach them what kinds of things to do with the
9 kids. We know lots of things to do, and yet,
10 it doesn't get translated. So, some kind of
11 school pattern, parent partnership, but almost
12 conceived as a professional development.

13 One of the most impressive pieces
14 is the work of using literacy objects as play
15 objects, and yet, that gets done routinely in
16 middle- and upper-class homes and not so much
17 in lower-class homes. That would be an easy
18 one for teachers to do. Dialogic and shared
19 book reading would be another one. All of
20 those could be done in a very quick way, but
21 it needs to be a structured program.

22 DR. LESAUX: So, a couple other

1 things, just to add to that, especially with
2 zero to 5 in mind. One challenge is that the
3 education is the first time we are able to
4 systematically reach all of the parents, or so
5 we think.

6 But some of the interventional
7 work that we have been doing in Massachusetts
8 is really around community leaders, tapping
9 faith-based leaders, and places where families
10 gather, in order to get some of this
11 information into some of these settings.
12 These are folks who often are regular
13 attendees at different community-based
14 institutions.

15 The second thing we have been
16 doing is pushing on plans, and this is every
17 school and district has a writeup about their
18 family inclusion as part of their plans, some
19 kind of family engagement. How can we better
20 link that to learning?

21 So, one of the things, rather than
22 how many parents came through the door, in

1 fact, a lot of the good research will tell you
2 that is actually how you get achievement gains
3 and very good family engagement work, but we
4 rarely ask schools to measure their
5 achievement gains as a function of family
6 engagement events.

7 The last setting that I will say
8 that we have been doing some work in is
9 actually in home-based daycare, home-based
10 early care settings. Many of our immigrant
11 families use women in the neighborhood who
12 have five or six children at their house. We
13 have been taking some of the early reading
14 programs, and this is a generally isolated
15 group of providers who don't get a lot of
16 attention from the State, around a capability-
17 building effort to get those who are
18 exceptionally receptive to information and, of
19 course, very oriented towards good support of
20 parents.

21 So, if we can get those good
22 traits and push a little on early literacy and

1 the talk campaigns, where we sort of talk and
2 definitely talk in the native language in
3 these settings to elevate quality. That is
4 certainly a very untapped area.

5 Most of these children are not in
6 central daycare, if you look at the State
7 levels that we have looked at.

8 DR. STRICKLAND: I just wanted to
9 add a little more to Michael's comment. It
10 will require showing -- if people haven't been
11 raised in homes where you just play with
12 children on a natural basis and engage in
13 language and do things, a zoo, the ordinary
14 things, inexpensive things, where you actually
15 talk about what you're seeing, if this isn't
16 a part of your own upbringing, it isn't
17 necessarily something you do with your own
18 children.

19 So, there will be a question of
20 showing, not just telling or giving handouts,
21 and doing it in ways that are very respectful.

22 MS. LANDESMAN RAMEY: I would like

1 to ask about the role or the opportunity that
2 you might see in this grant mechanism for
3 states to consider gifted and talented vis-a-
4 vis differentiated instruction and cultural,
5 language, ethnic, and racial sensitivities.
6 And specifically, this week I heard a
7 principal get up and talk about his low-income
8 children, some of whom are gifted and
9 talented, but the ability to engage these
10 students around third, fourth, fifth grade
11 goes away.

12 Many of our federal grants
13 understandably focus on bringing low-
14 achieving, striving readers up to average.
15 But are we being insensitive when we don't
16 realize that within all of our subgroups in
17 the country, including kids in special ed, and
18 so forth, we have some talented?

19 And it is like we just think,
20 well, they're already average or better; let
21 them go. I think it may disengage some
22 community and family effort from our low-

1 income and historically marginalized
2 populations if gifted and talented cannot be
3 mentioned.

4 So, what are your opinions about
5 whether it could be included in a state plan
6 or not?

7 DR. LESAUX: Well, the only thing
8 I will say is that they are certainly an at-
9 risk population. If you look at their overall
10 outcomes, they are certainly in some ways at
11 risk.

12 And gifted and talented does not
13 mean high level across the board. Many
14 students who are classified as gifted and
15 talented, in fact, show very uneven profiles
16 within their academic performance, and many
17 need a lot of work around that, inferential
18 kinds of activities, perspective-taking, that
19 kind of thing.

20 So, to that end, the data would
21 suggest this is a group who needs to be
22 certainly attended to.

1 DR. STRICKLAND: Differentiated
2 instruction properly should account for those
3 children. There is no question about that.

4 And I worry about poor kids or
5 kids from certain neighborhoods,
6 automatically the assumption being that they
7 are going to have trouble, and about English
8 language learners.

9 The variability within any group
10 is very, very great. And while as well, I'm
11 sure, the others on the panel worry a lot
12 about the kids who are struggling, and that is
13 what the topic is here today, I think we also
14 worry that teachers get the impression that
15 certain groups are automatically -- and these
16 are well-meaning teachers, teachers and
17 administrators who want to do the right thing
18 -- but the assumption is that these kids are
19 going to have trouble anyway. And I struggle
20 with this all the time. I don't know how this
21 particular grant could account for that, but
22 it is that variability.

1 The point is not to just look at a
2 kid or know his surname and make assumptions.
3 This is a very important issue.

4 DR. KAMIL: Just in a pragmatic
5 sense, I think if you take care of the
6 struggling readers, what happens is you free
7 up teachers to work with students who aren't
8 struggling. So, it takes fewer classroom
9 resources from the teacher, and so on. So, I
10 think it has that side benefit, and I'm not
11 sure that that is the focal point of this.

12 But, in fact, I want to second
13 what Dorothy said. If you provide for
14 classroom instruction -- that is where I
15 started my remarks -- and it is of high
16 quality, it is going to account for those
17 differences among students, and that plan
18 ought to be there.

19 DR. LESAUX: And that's why
20 assessment has to go beyond children and move
21 to the setting level. We have got to hold
22 districts and states accountable for also

1 talking about the quality of their settings.

2 Because even in our own work in a
3 large urban district, it is a bit of a
4 lottery. You might move from one very good
5 classroom to another the whole way up or not.
6 And so, we do need to pay attention to that,
7 so that we aren't just thinking about kids who
8 will struggle, but settings that don't promote
9 development.

10 MS. SPITZ: I want to thank our
11 panel again for this amazing discussion to
12 take place.

13 And I also want to thank those of
14 you who offered public comment, and those of
15 you who are listening online this morning.

16 We are going to have a second
17 session this afternoon. It runs from 1:00 to
18 4:00. We have kind of designed them as
19 freestanding sessions, so you can attend one
20 or both.

21 We will have speakers this
22 afternoon that represent more of the state and

1 local perspective on these issues and, also,
2 a professor from the Curry School of Education
3 talking about the needs of students with
4 disabilities, but also there are literacy
5 issues as well.

6 The folks at the registration
7 table have information, if you haven't
8 received it, about what lunch options are in
9 the area.

10 So, if you're coming back, please
11 be back by 1:00.

12 And also, if you did want to
13 submit a written statement, those need to be
14 in to us today. So, they should be either
15 submitted to somebody at the registration
16 table or they can be emailed to the email
17 address that was in our notice. Of course,
18 you can ask me if you need more information.

19 And thank you very much.

20 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter
21 went off the record for lunch at 11:27 a.m.
22 and went back on the record at 1:06 p.m.)

A-F-T-E-R-N-O-O-N S-E-S-S-I-O-N

1:06 p.m.

MS. SPITZ: Good afternoon.

Thank you all for coming this afternoon. I know some of you were here this morning.

Since many of you were not, we are going to try to run through the same opening that we did this morning. So some of you will hear a few of the same things over again. But we have a whole new panel with us and a new facilitator.

I run a group of reading programs at the Department of Education in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

We are here today to talk about the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program. We have a lot to talk about. So, I want to get quickly to our facilitator and our experts.

And you will hear more in a minute about how the day is going to work, if you

1 have any questions about our agenda.

2 And if you need anything, the
3 folks at the table from Synergy can help you
4 out. So, don't hesitate to go out there and
5 ask if you need something.

6 With that, I would like to
7 introduce Dr. Carl Harris. He is going to be
8 our facilitator for this afternoon.

9 Dr. Harris has been the Deputy
10 Assistant Secretary for Policy and State
11 Technical Assistance in the Office of
12 Elementary and Secondary Education at the
13 Department since January of this year.

14 Prior to his appointment, he was
15 the Superintendent of Durham Public Schools,
16 a District of 53 schools and nearly 33,000
17 students. Dr. Harris also served the District
18 as Deputy Superintendent and Assistant
19 Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

20 Dr. Harris also served for five
21 years as the Superintendent of the Franklin
22 County Public Schools, also in North Carolina.

1 Dr. Harris has been a classroom
2 teacher, a coach, and a district
3 administrator, as well as serving on numerous
4 professional boards and leadership teams.

5 He has received many awards for
6 his educational leadership, including the
7 Central Carolina Regional Superintendent of
8 the Year, the National Association for Gifted
9 Children Educator Award, and the Franklin
10 County Living Black Legend Award.

11 In 2008, he received the
12 University Council for Educational
13 Administration's Educational Leadership Award,
14 and is a graduate of the first class of the
15 Broad Superintendents Academy.

16 He received his doctorate in
17 education administration from North Carolina
18 State University. He also holds a master of
19 arts in education, a master of administration,
20 and an education specialist degree in
21 administration and supervision.

22 So, we are very happy to have him

1 here facilitating our event.

2 DR. HARRIS: Thank you, Deborah.

3 Good afternoon.

4 (Chorus of "Good afternoon" from
5 audience members.)

6 First of all, I would like to
7 welcome you to the Department of Education.
8 Thank you for joining us this afternoon. I
9 want you to know it is a great pleasure and
10 honor for me to serve as your facilitator.

11 As you all know, the purpose of
12 this public hearing is to gather expertise and
13 input from the public on the development of a
14 grant competition under the Striving Readers
15 Comprehensive Literacy Program.

16 We at the Department take these
17 meetings very seriously, and your input will
18 be critical to our work on this program for
19 the next year.

20 Excuse me for a minute. A little
21 technical difficulty.

22 (Pause.)

1 As I mentioned earlier, we take
2 these hearings very serious, and your input
3 will be critical to support us in our
4 decisionmaking.

5 I want to preface this meeting by
6 saying that I know that literacy is a broad-
7 ranging and deeply-complex topic. And I also
8 want to say that in no way do we anticipate
9 that we can cover all the areas around
10 literacy in this brief time that we have
11 together this afternoon.

12 But I would like to say to you
13 that we do have some excellent experts here
14 who are with us this afternoon who bring to us
15 a range of expertise, who will discuss
16 literacy as it relates to a variety of
17 different priorities, including increasing the
18 achievement of English learners and students
19 with disabilities.

20 I also look forward to hearing
21 your input, your ideas, and your feedback on
22 this important program.

1 So, at this time, I am going to
2 turn it back over to Deborah, who leads our
3 literacy effort in the Office of Elementary
4 and Secondary Education, to give you a
5 overview of the Striving Readers Comprehension
6 Literacy Program.

7 Deborah?

8 MS. SPITZ: I'm going to go
9 through this fairly quickly. We wanted to
10 give this to you as a handout, so you would
11 have the information.

12 Mostly what I am going to talk
13 about in a brief few minutes is what's in the
14 statutory language for the Striving Readers
15 Comprehensive Literacy Program. So, while we
16 are here to ask your input on a variety of
17 topics, the things that I am going to talk
18 about are pretty much program requirements.

19 So, basically, the goal of the
20 program is to build comprehensive literacy
21 systems in states. And this program is
22 different from our other literacy programs in

1 at least two key ways.

2 The first and the biggest
3 difference, I think, is that it is a birth-to-
4 grade-12 program, which we haven't done in the
5 past. We have focused on specific age ranges.
6 So, serving birth to grade 12 is a challenge
7 for states. It is a challenge for districts
8 and early learning providers. But I think
9 this program is definitely a way to focus
10 attention on the needs of children at all of
11 these very important age ranges.

12 The second way that this program
13 is different is that there is a small formula
14 piece of it that goes to all states, and that
15 goes to states to develop comprehensive
16 literacy plans. And then, there is a large
17 competitive component to the program, which is
18 mostly what we are going to talk about today.

19 This is just a breakout of how the
20 funding is set aside. The formula grants that
21 I just referenced, those recently went out to
22 states. Most states received \$150,000. So,

1 we are not talking about a lot of money.

2 Again, these are essentially
3 planning grants. They are grants for states
4 to either develop state literacy teams or
5 enhance the state literacy teams they have,
6 and to use those teams of experts to develop
7 or enhance, because many states have some kind
8 of comprehensive literacy plan. So, this
9 allows them to build on that because most
10 states don't have a birth-to-grade-12
11 comprehensive literacy plan.

12 And the plans, again, need to
13 address the needs of children from birth to
14 grade 12, but particularly those students who
15 are English language learners and students
16 with disabilities.

17 The competitive grants piece,
18 which is the larger piece of the funds, it
19 will be competed to states. So, states are
20 the eligible entities. We hope from this
21 meeting we are gathering information to
22 finalize basically what our application will

1 look like, and when we issue an application,
2 we hope that then states will apply in the
3 spring, and we will make awards in the summer
4 to fall.

5 A key piece of this program is
6 that the states that do receive funds under
7 this competitive grant will need to make
8 competitive subgrants. This is the language
9 around what those subgrants must do.

10 They must fund services that have
11 the characteristics of effective literacy
12 instruction through professional development,
13 screening and assessment, targeted
14 interventions for students reading below grade
15 level, and other research-based methods of
16 improving classroom instruction and practice.

17 And this is an important part of
18 that. These are the requirements by law in
19 how states must award these funds. So, they
20 may use up to 5 percent for state leadership
21 and administration activities, and they must
22 award at least 95 percent of the funding to

1 LEAs and early childhood providers.

2 And at the state level, it has to
3 fall within these percentages: up to 15
4 percent for birth to pre-K, 40 percent for
5 grades K to five, and 40 percent for grades
6 six to twelve, with an equitable distribution
7 between middle and high school. Again, this
8 is in the statute.

9 I am not going to read this, but
10 just be aware that the eligible entities for
11 these subgrants, when states hold their
12 competitions, for most of the grants the
13 eligible entity will be an LEA. But in the
14 case of early literacy, there is this
15 definition of who else might be eligible. And
16 it talks about early learning providers and
17 partnerships between LEAs and public and
18 private entities.

19 And basically, I talked about this
20 a little bit. So, our timeline is we just
21 awarded the formula funds, and states are
22 right now in the process of developing these

1 comprehensive literacy plans. You will hear
2 a little bit more about that from our panel.

3 Then, we will publish a notice
4 inviting applications. States can use
5 whatever they are developing with their
6 literacy teams. Even if it is in raw form,
7 they can use that to develop their application
8 for this competition. And then, they will
9 apply. Then, we hope to award grants by
10 August.

11 And with that, I am going to turn
12 things back to Carl Harris.

13 DR. HARRIS: Let me briefly walk
14 you through the agenda for the rest of this
15 afternoon.

16 We will begin the expert
17 presentations and panel shortly, which our
18 expert guests will give us a presentation.
19 The presentations will be followed by a short
20 discussion with our expert panel here on the
21 stage from the Department of Education.

22 Afterwards, we will open up the

1 floor to public speakers to provide input.

2 Prior to the public input, we will break for
3 a five-minute recess, to give each of you an
4 opportunity to have a short break.

5 And then, we will come back and we
6 will have the public comments. This will be
7 an opportunity for each of you from the public
8 who have registered to give your statement for
9 the record.

10 Now let me briefly just reiterate
11 the goals for this meeting. First, this
12 meeting is to help us develop a notice in
13 writing applications that requires states to
14 develop high-quality proposals that will
15 result in increased student achievement.

16 One way to develop a high-quality
17 notice is by providing time to the public to
18 provide input to this program. As I mentioned
19 earlier, this is very important for us.

20 We also hope that our meeting will
21 help paint a vision for what a comprehensive
22 literacy program could and should look like at

1 the state and the local level.

2 This meeting is an opportunity for
3 the Ed staff to receive expert public guidance
4 in response to questions asked in the notice.

5 Just a few more brief points to
6 set expectations for the meeting. We are on
7 a tight time schedule, as you can see on our
8 screen. So, once again, we want to maximize
9 the time so that we have an opportunity for
10 public input.

11 We will be keeping time, so that
12 our speakers know when their start time and
13 finish time is available.

14 And finally, just a quick
15 reminder, if you do have a cell phone, we do
16 ask that you put it on vibrate or turn it off.

17 Each of you should have received a
18 copy of this presentation. So, you will have
19 our contact information and instructions on
20 how to access a transcript of this session
21 online.

22 Now it is my pleasure to introduce

1 our experts and panel members that you will
2 hear from today.

3 Our first panel member, Dr. Paige
4 Pullen. Dr. Paige Pullen is an Associate
5 Professor in Special Education at the
6 University of Virginia and a nationally-
7 recognized expert in the field of learning
8 disabilities and early literacy development.

9 Dr. Pullen is the Coordinator of
10 Special Programs at the University of
11 Virginia. She received a bachelor's degree in
12 elementary education from the University of
13 Florida in 1988, followed by a master's in
14 early childhood education in 1990 and a Ph.D.
15 in special education in 2000, both from the
16 University of Florida.

17 Dr. Pullen has also co-authored
18 several books, including the latest version of
19 the widely-used Exceptional Learner, 11th
20 edition, with co-authors Daniel Hallahan and
21 James Kauffman; Students with Learning
22 Disabilities with co-authors Cecil Mercer,

1 Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities
2 and Phonological Awareness Assessment and
3 Instruction: a Sound Beginning.

4 She has also published numerous
5 book chapters for students at risk for school
6 failures and with identified learning
7 disabilities.

8 Dr. Jill Slack. Dr. Slack is
9 Director of Literacy at the Louisiana
10 Department of Education, where she plays the
11 lead role in the day-to-day administration and
12 implementation of the State's literacy
13 efforts, including the management of
14 Louisiana's Striving Readers Project, a
15 federal grant aimed at improving the reading
16 skills of adolescent students who are reading
17 below grade level.

18 Dr. Slack is also leading the
19 development of Louisiana's Comprehensive
20 Literacy Plan. Recently, Dr. Slack served on
21 the State's Education Reform Team, and she co-
22 authored Louisiana's Race to the Top proposal.

1 Prior to joining the Department in
2 September of 2008, Dr. Slack was a Project
3 Director for SEDL, where she designed and
4 provided training and ongoing support to
5 state, local, and intermediate agencies in
6 reading, writing, and school improvement
7 strategies.

8 Over the years, Dr. Slack has also
9 served as a reading specialist, administrator,
10 and classroom teacher in a large public school
11 system. She has also been an ESL instructor,
12 a research site trainer, and program evaluator
13 for the Accelerated School Project and an
14 assistant professor in higher education.

15 Wynne Tye. Wynne currently serves
16 as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum
17 and Instruction in Hillsborough County Public
18 Schools, located in Tampa, Florida. HCPS, as
19 her District is known as, is the eighth
20 largest district in the nation.

21 Ms. Tye graduated from the
22 University of South Florida and began her

1 teaching career in Hillsborough County in
2 1981, where she taught severe, profoundly
3 mentally-handicapped students for nine years.

4 Ms. Tye received her master's
5 degree from the University of South Florida in
6 educational leadership and became an assistant
7 principal in 1990. She was appointed
8 principal of the Walker Middle School in 2002,
9 followed by a promotion to the General
10 Director of Middle Education in 2004. And
11 prior to her appointment as the Assistant
12 Superintendent in 2008, Ms. Tye also served
13 the District as General Director of the
14 Exceptional Student Education.

15 Ms. Tye is the recipient of the
16 13th Annual Praeceptor Distinguished Service
17 Award and the Dr. Earl Lennard Leadership
18 Award.

19 In addition to our expert
20 speakers, as you all know, you met Deborah
21 Spitz, who will serve as our Department
22 expert, along with Dr. Jacqueline Jones, who

1 is the Senior Advisor to the Secretary for
2 Early Learning.

3 So, at this time, I would like to
4 turn it over to our expert presenters.

5 Dr. Pullen?

6 DR. PULLEN: Good afternoon.

7 I am happy to be here today and
8 very honored that I was asked. So, thank you
9 to Deborah for calling and inviting me here
10 today.

11 I am going to talk a little bit
12 about what a comprehensive reading program
13 might look like, but, more specifically, what
14 the needs of students with disabilities may
15 be; as we develop these comprehensive reading
16 programs, that we make sure we are considering
17 the needs of kids with disabilities or those
18 children who are at risk for disabilities.

19 So, when we think about a
20 comprehensive reading program, one of our
21 first questions, we know that ultimately what
22 we want is for kids to gain sound reading

1 comprehension, that they are able to gain
2 meaning from print. So, the ultimate goal of
3 reading instruction is reading comprehension.

4 However, we have multiple
5 influences on reading comprehension. That may
6 be our ultimate goal, but how do we get there?

7 So, this conceptual framework
8 shows a little bit of how complex the reading
9 process is and all of the different influences
10 that will affect reading comprehension.

11 So, as you are developing
12 comprehensive reading programs, some of the
13 things that you will be considering are those
14 early language experiences. So, early
15 language experiences, we know that those
16 experiences are going to form the foundation
17 for what will end up being a child's success
18 or perhaps failure, once they move into early
19 formal reading instruction.

20 So, in our comprehensive programs,
21 we want to make sure that we are addressing
22 the needs of young children who are at risk

1 for disabilities and make sure that we provide
2 a solid foundation, so that kids can benefit
3 from formal reading instruction, once they do
4 reach school age.

5 So, after we have made sure that
6 we have included that early language/early
7 home literacy, that we are not starting in
8 first grade or second grade; we are starting
9 before kids ever get to school. Then, we
10 think, okay, now they are in preschool; what
11 can we do?

12 Well, then, we think about the
13 pathway from those early foundational skills
14 to reading comprehension. One of the
15 influences we know on later reading
16 comprehension is phonemic awareness. We know
17 that phonemic awareness is going to help
18 children be able to decode, and that being
19 able to decode will help children gain reading
20 fluency. And that once they have gained
21 reading fluency, they will be able to,
22 hopefully, understand what it is that they are

1 reading.

2 So, we can make sure that our
3 preschool programs have sound programs in
4 phonemic awareness and print awareness, that
5 we are focusing on letter knowledge, making
6 sure we are developing those foundational
7 skills. So that, once they get to school age,
8 that they are able to benefit from phonics
9 instruction and learn those decoding skills.
10 So, we know that those pieces are going to be
11 in place.

12 We know that, for children, once
13 they have learned how to decode, that they
14 have to learn how to decode at a level of
15 automaticity. It is not enough that they
16 learn how to decode, but they have to learn to
17 decode so automatically that they are able to
18 read fluently.

19 Reading fluency is highly
20 correlated with reading comprehension. So, we
21 know that the comprehensive reading program,
22 that we are going to have fluency instruction

1 in place.

2 And then, you think, well, we have
3 done it all. We have done phonemic awareness,
4 phonics, fluency. We have focused on early
5 language. But, then, we have all of these
6 other pieces as well.

7 We have vocabulary and background
8 knowledge. We want to make sure that
9 throughout school, from early childhood all
10 the way through high school, that we are
11 focusing on vocabulary, breadth and depth of
12 word knowledge. So, we will make sure that
13 those pieces are in place.

14 We hope that we will provide
15 children lots of rich experiences to develop
16 background knowledge, but that our instruction
17 will not stop at providing background
18 knowledge, that we will actually teach kids
19 how to think before they read and how to
20 activate that background knowledge, and how to
21 think about what types of text structures they
22 might be reading, and how that might

1 influence. So, we will teach activation of
2 background knowledge and knowledge of text
3 structures.

4 So, all of these pieces are going
5 to go into a comprehensive reading program,
6 and that leaves us with reading comprehension.
7 So, if we do all of that, will kids be able to
8 understand what they are reading?

9 Well, we know that we do a lot of
10 assessment in reading comprehension, but we
11 don't necessarily do a lot of instruction in
12 reading comprehension. So, throughout school
13 from elementary and on into high school, we
14 need to make sure that we are focusing on
15 teaching strategies to help children gain
16 meaning from print and focus on reading
17 comprehension strategies.

18 So, do you think that is enough
19 influences on reading comprehension and
20 reading success? It is a fairly complex
21 process, but there are more influences. There
22 are perhaps some influences that may be more

1 specific to kids with disabilities or at risk
2 for disabilities. And we cannot get into all
3 of those today, but we will focus primarily in
4 this talk on kids with learning disabilities.

5 Well, let's look at what some of
6 those might be. So, we have reading
7 comprehension. We know there are all of those
8 other multiple influences on reading
9 comprehension. What else might come into
10 play?

11 We know that kids with reading
12 disabilities and learning disabilities
13 generally often have working memory issues,
14 phonological short-term memory. That is going
15 to affect reading comprehension, learning how
16 to decode at a level of automaticity, and many
17 of the other influences on reading
18 comprehension. So, working memory capacity
19 may be specific to kids with disability in
20 terms of how we have to intervene.

21 Metacognitive abilities. Skilled
22 readers understand when they do and when they

1 don't understand. Unskilled readers think
2 often of reading as word calling because they
3 have had to focus so much on decoding, that
4 they forget the real purpose of reading. And
5 they read and sometimes don't even realize
6 when they have made an error.

7 So, the difference between a
8 skilled reader and an unskilled reader
9 sometimes focuses on this issue related to
10 metacognitive, being aware of your own thought
11 processes, being able to monitor and cross-
12 check your reading, and make sure that you
13 understand when and when you aren't
14 comprehending.

15 There are also deficits that kids
16 can have rapid automatized naming, another
17 deficit that is going to impact reading
18 fluency.

19 And there are factors related to
20 interest and motivation. For kids with
21 disabilities, many of these children have
22 faced repeated failure, and if you repeatedly

1 fail at something, you are probably not going
2 to be very likely to select that as something
3 that you want to do.

4 We have to make sure that we
5 provide opportunities for children with
6 disabilities to succeed and create instruction
7 for them that guarantees that they move from
8 one step to another, and that we don't allow
9 them to lose interest and motivation.

10 So, that is going to bring me to
11 we have got all these influences on reading
12 comprehension. We know the different types of
13 deficits that students can have. What in a
14 comprehensive reading program should we focus
15 on? Should we focus on remediation? Should
16 we focus on intervention? Or should we focus
17 on prevention?

18 In a comprehensive districtwide or
19 statewide model, we would want to have all
20 three of these pieces in place. So,
21 remediation refers to the process of
22 correcting a deficiency. There will be some

1 children who have already experienced failure,
2 and we need to have a plan for those children,
3 those students, so that we can remediate and
4 help them come up-to-speed in their reading
5 skills.

6 Intervention refers to the process
7 of coming into or between, so as to hinder or
8 alter an action, so really to stop failure.
9 Now the good news is that we know so much more
10 about reading instruction that we do know how
11 in the early years to intervene early and
12 perhaps prevent some disability, some
13 identification of learning disabilities,
14 because we have provided intervention early,
15 or reading failure.

16 Prevention is the process of
17 keeping something from happening. So, we also
18 want to have prevention in place. So,
19 prevention may be that early instruction,
20 beginning from birth to age 5, where we focus
21 on what's happening in homes and making a link
22 between, a transition between early childhood

1 and schooling; intervention through out-
2 schooling, where when we notice a problem, we
3 don't wait for the problem to get too bad; we
4 intervene early, step in, provide evidence-
5 based instruction. And for kids who have
6 already met with failure, that we don't give
7 up on those children, but we provide
8 opportunities to remediate the deficits that
9 they have. So, we want to have a plan of
10 remediation, intervention, and prevention in
11 our comprehensive literacy programs.

12 I am going to go through these
13 next slides quickly. This is something that
14 you have all seen in terms of thinking about
15 that cycle of assessing and diagnosing,
16 teaching, having students practice and
17 applying in real reading, and then reassessing
18 and reteaching.

19 But I wanted to equate, as we look
20 back to this idea of remediation,
21 intervention, and prevention, we see at the
22 bottom of the slide a check engine light, a

1 service engine soon, you know the lights on a
2 car. If we think about this idea of
3 remediation, intervention, and prevention from
4 maintaining a car, we can think of this cycle
5 of assessment, teaching, and reteaching.

6 So, we are going to assess and
7 diagnose by making sure that we evaluate
8 what's going on with our car. We are not
9 going to wait until the car runs out of oil
10 and need to replace the engine, right?
11 Hopefully, what we will do is we will check
12 the oil. We will assess whether the oil is
13 low. If it is low, then we are going to add
14 oil. We are going to intervene, and we are
15 not going to wait for the engine to fail.

16 The same can be thought of for the
17 prevention and intervention of reading
18 disabilities. We are going to assess and
19 diagnose. Based on that assessment and
20 diagnosis, we will intervene and provide
21 instruction that matches the student's needs.

22 We will practice with them and

1 help them apply those strategies that we have
2 taught them, based on our intervention and our
3 assessment. Then, we will make sure that they
4 have actually learned what it is that we have
5 taught.

6 So, step one is to gather data.
7 What are the student's strengths and
8 weaknesses? We may use standardized tests,
9 informal measures, and teacher observations.
10 This is kind of like checking the engine.
11 We're checking the oil.

12 The next step would be to provide
13 direct, explicit instruction in the strategy,
14 skill, or process the student needs based on
15 the assessment that we have conducted. We
16 will want to model the skill and provide
17 direct explanation.

18 If it is a student who has
19 repeatedly failed at something, had a
20 difficult time learning something, we want to
21 ensure success. To do that, we are going to
22 start out with "Let me show you how to do it,"

1 a lot of explicit teaching and modeling.

2 We move from that explicit
3 teaching and modeling from "Let me show you
4 how to do it" to "Let me help you do it." So,
5 we provide multiple opportunities for the
6 students to use what has been taught.

7 We begin with practice that
8 provides a significant teacher support, and we
9 move to more independent practice. So, "Let
10 me show you how to do it." "Let me help you
11 do it." "Now you do it." So, that's the
12 practice.

13 We also want to make sure that we
14 don't stop there, that students need to
15 understand how to implement those strategies
16 and skills in real reading, in connected text.
17 So, the student applies the skill learned in
18 real reading. We continue to gather
19 observational data about the child's use of
20 the strategy during reading, and keeping in
21 mind that the goal is to have the student use
22 the strategy independently on his or her own.

1 So, we need to think of a way to
2 make sure that we are promoting generalization
3 in the skills that we teach. Many kids can be
4 taught something, and they immediately know
5 how to make that generalization. Kids with
6 disabilities often need more explicit
7 instruction to see how that connects to real
8 reading and writing. And we want to help show
9 them what that connection is. They are not
10 going to make a generalization necessarily on
11 their own.

12 So, then, we reassess and start
13 the teaching cycle over. Has the student
14 learned what you have provided through direct
15 instruction? So, we assess during the
16 teaching and practice opportunities and we
17 assess following teaching opportunities to see
18 that the student has learned what we have
19 taught.

20 We continually use that data to
21 make decisions. We reteach the skill if it
22 was not mastered or we teach the new skill or

1 strategy that is appropriate in a systemized
2 instructional sequence.

3 So, that is how we would go
4 through the cycle of teaching and reteaching,
5 but how do we consider these multiple
6 influences on reading comprehension in terms
7 of what we should assess or diagnose? So,
8 what do I assess, diagnose, and teach?

9 We know from all of the multiple
10 influences on reading comprehension that oral
11 language has to be a piece of what it is that
12 we teach, assess, diagnose, and teach. Print
13 awareness is another important factor in a
14 comprehensive literacy program.

15 Phonemic awareness, and if you'll
16 notice, this little boy is holding his ears.
17 So, phonemic awareness is an understanding of
18 the sound structure of language, is specific
19 to sound, nothing to do with letters. And we
20 want to make sure that we have phonemic
21 awareness.

22 We want to teach word recognition,

1 which includes high-frequency sight words as
2 well as decoding strategies, reading fluency,
3 vocabulary, and reading comprehension. These
4 are the reading skills of a skilled reader,
5 and you will see in this chain everything is
6 linked together.

7 If everything is linked together
8 and there aren't any breaks in the chain, then
9 everything is going to work well. But if you
10 have one link broken, then the reading process
11 falls apart. What we need to do is make sure
12 we know where that broken link is and
13 intervene before the chain falls apart.

14 So, where do I begin intervention?
15 You are going to assess and diagnose, and you
16 are going to select the lowest skill in the
17 hierarchy of reading development, move
18 systematically through the hierarchy, keeping
19 in mind that students are building skills
20 simultaneously. So, even though in this
21 ladder it is shown as a hierarchy, it is not
22 separate rungs where they are not connected.

1 They are connected.

2 So, if students are failing to
3 achieve phonemic awareness, that is where the
4 intervention needs to take place. If they are
5 failing at the decoding point or having
6 deficits in decoding, that is where we need to
7 intervene, and so on and so forth, up the
8 ladder.

9 I think for older readers one of
10 the concerns is that we often think that we
11 automatically need to implement in fluency and
12 comprehension and preventions, but, in fact,
13 the breakdown is usually more at the bottom of
14 the ladder, skills in phonemic awareness,
15 letter knowledge, and phonemic decoding. And
16 we need to make sure that, even for our older
17 readers, we are intervening in the right
18 place.

19 So, what do the teachers need to
20 know? They need to understand the reading
21 process, know how to assess each key area of
22 reading, understand the framework for the

1 prevention and intervention of reading
2 disabilities, and possess the knowledge and
3 skills to implement multiple strategies for
4 intervention and prevention.

5 Now how can states and districts
6 support children at risk for disabilities? I
7 want to quickly tell you the story about Eve.
8 Eve is a young child. She is in second grade,
9 and she has a learning disability.

10 Eve struggled with reading from
11 the time she was in kindergarten. She is a
12 bright, young girl who comes from a very
13 educated family with both parents -- one
14 parent is a high school teacher; the other
15 parent has a Ph.D. in education. So, we are
16 talking about someone who has had many, many
17 opportunities to learn before she got to
18 school.

19 But she began struggling with
20 literacy in kindergarten. In first grade, Eve
21 was provided two days of intensive support
22 from August to January. Could we call that

1 tier 2? Okay.

2 Then, she was provided two
3 additional days of intensive support from
4 January to May. Maybe tier 3?

5 Then, she attended summer school
6 and private tutoring, still struggling. At
7 the beginning of second grade, Eve received
8 two days of additional support. Back to tier
9 2.

10 The school district denied the
11 parents a full evaluation for a learning
12 disability quoting, "Special education is a
13 detriment to children" and "There's no such
14 thing as special education for students with
15 learning disabilities anymore."

16 So, what can we do as districts
17 and states to support children at risk for
18 disabilities? We can provide early and
19 intensive support for children at risk for
20 reading disabilities. We can implement
21 excellent tier 1 instruction to all children
22 through a comprehensive literacy program. We

1 can identify children who need extra support
2 and provide evidence-based instruction through
3 increasingly intensive instruction, RtI.

4 However, we don't stop there and
5 leave kids in tier 2 instruction when they may
6 be identified. We provide full evaluations
7 for students who have expected disabilities,
8 and we continue with that excellent evidence-
9 based instruction for children identified with
10 disabilities and follow an individualized
11 education program.

12 We also advocate for children and
13 youth with disabilities to ensure that we
14 continue to consider their rights to a free
15 and appropriate public education with supports
16 and accommodations as needed.

17 So, thank you for considering the
18 rights of Eve and the many children who
19 struggle with learning disabilities. And I
20 invite you to teach well. And there's my
21 email, if you have questions later.

22 Thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 DR. SLACK: Good afternoon.

3 I would like to thank Deborah and
4 the Department of Education for inviting me to
5 be part of this panel to discuss the critical
6 components of statewide literacy plans, as
7 well as some considerations to take into
8 account in addressing the needs of diverse
9 learners.

10 I would like to start by sharing
11 with you this visual representation that
12 highlights Louisiana's vision for improving
13 literacy in our State that includes the key
14 concepts and words in our plan for improving
15 literacy that have also brought clarity to our
16 efforts in Louisiana, and have also engaged
17 those who were once not engaged.

18 So, my talk is going to emphasize
19 the core components that we believe should be
20 in a comprehensive literacy plan to create
21 substantial improvements for literacy for all
22 learners, especially disadvantaged children,

1 limited-English-proficient children, as well
2 as children with disabilities.

3 What we have found through our
4 review of the research and policies and
5 promising practices on literacy, we found five
6 interconnected core components that are
7 critical to a comprehensive literacy plan in
8 the State.

9 The first is leadership and
10 sustainability. Creating literacy teams and
11 plans for organizing, implementing, and
12 sustaining effective approaches to birth-
13 through-grade-12 literacy. We know that
14 through research, research has shown that
15 positive student learning outcomes start with
16 strong leadership committed to a quality
17 literacy plan. So, leadership and
18 sustainability is upfront and center in our
19 plan.

20 We have also learned from our
21 Reading First experiences that sustainability
22 needs to be addressed as a forethought or from

1 the onset of an effort, and not after a
2 program has begun. We feel that leadership is
3 key to ensuring that sustainability occurs.
4 So, we have paired leadership and
5 sustainability together.

6 A second component is standards-
7 based curriculum, examining the State
8 standards, the grade-level expectation and
9 curriculum frameworks through the lens of
10 literacy.

11 In an effective comprehensive
12 literacy plan, teachers translate the
13 standards and curriculum goals into lessons
14 that integrate literacy tasks across the
15 curriculum and throughout the day. Every
16 content area, as Michael Kamil mentioned this
17 morning, and every non-academic kind of text
18 as well, has its own vocabulary, formats,
19 conventions, and ways of understanding the
20 words on a page.

21 So, if we are going to improve
22 student outcomes, teachers need knowledge to

1 integrate reading and writing and speaking and
2 listening, as well as critical thinking skills
3 in all content areas.

4 A comprehensive assessment system
5 is also a critical component for improving
6 literacy instruction. And key to meeting this
7 goal is accurate, timely assessment that
8 allows teachers to use data to differentiate
9 instruction according to individual student
10 needs.

11 In our plan, comprehensive
12 assessment practices to support effective
13 instruction include both assessment of
14 learning and assessment for learning, both
15 formative and summative assessment. And the
16 plan provides schools and districts with
17 guidance on identifying and using valid and
18 reliable managers to screen progress, monitor,
19 and diagnose literacy needs to target
20 instruction for each grade level and each age
21 span, birth through grade 12.

22 A fourth component is instruction

1 and intervention. This is our RtI framework
2 in Louisiana, which also includes the
3 connection to assessment.

4 In our plan, high-quality
5 instruction and intervention is key to
6 improving the literacy achievement of all
7 students. This piece in our plan addresses
8 several factors that Dr. Pullen spoken about
9 just a few minutes ago, including the key
10 skill areas that children need to be
11 proficient in, phonological awareness,
12 decoding, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension,
13 and writing.

14 Motivation is also addressed in
15 this part of our plan as well as collaborative
16 learning, and explicit, intentional
17 instruction is key in this part of our plan.

18 And the fifth component, fifth and
19 final, but it is equally important, is that of
20 professional learning and resources. In our
21 plan, professional learning is used as a broad
22 term to mean formal professional development

1 as well as those efforts, job-embedded
2 efforts, such as studying lesson plans, using
3 data to drive instruction, examining student
4 work, or tools for self-reflection.

5 So, developing learning
6 opportunities, web resources, and coordinated
7 support services, both within and outside of
8 the school that include community-based
9 organizations as well as families. This piece
10 also includes professional development for
11 parents. I think a speaker this morning
12 mentioned the importance of not just
13 professional development and learning for
14 teachers, but parents and families as well.

15 Also, in this piece of our plan,
16 we include specific actions for working with
17 institutions of higher education, so that they
18 know what is in our State plan, so that they
19 can better prepare teacher candidates to work
20 with students when they do become practicing
21 teachers. So, we have a strong connection
22 with institutions of higher education and

1 teacher preparation programs in our State in
2 this component, as well as links to other
3 components in our plan.

4 So, what are the roles and
5 capacities of states to help implement a
6 statewide comprehensive literacy plan, not
7 just at the State level, but at the LEA level
8 to assist schools?

9 One key role is for the State to
10 review the research on program and strategy
11 effectiveness, and we have done that in
12 developing the current plan that we have in
13 place, but continually reviewing that research
14 and using that research to inform improvements
15 in our plan.

16 Also, setting high expectations
17 and providing guidelines and oversight to
18 ensure strong implementation. An important
19 message to convey here is that literacy cuts
20 across all curriculum, and we are doing our
21 best to convey that message across the whole
22 spectrum. It is not easy. What we find is

1 that literacy is sometimes in competition with
2 other content areas. So, we are conveying the
3 importance that we are not in competition with
4 anything else, that literacy should be driving
5 all reform efforts in the school.

6 And it is very closely connected,
7 as a matter of fact, to the school improvement
8 plan. So, in our plan itself, we do a fairly
9 good job of articulating and working with
10 districts and schools to understand this isn't
11 something separate; it is something that you
12 should already be doing, and that many of
13 these components are already aligned with your
14 school improvement efforts.

15 Disseminating materials,
16 resources, and tools that prepare teachers to
17 deliver high-quality instruction, not just for
18 those who may be part of this program and be
19 successful in receiving funds to implement
20 SRCL, but also to everybody in the State. We
21 realize these funds may not reach everybody,
22 but how can we provide these materials and

1 distribute these materials and resources and
2 tools so that we prepare teachers across the
3 entire State?

4 As well as providing technical
5 assistance and support to implement these core
6 components, and I will talk in a few slides
7 down the way a little bit more about how we do
8 that in Louisiana.

9 Target intensive support for
10 schools with the greatest needs. We at the
11 State department cannot provide targeted
12 assistance to every school in the State. So,
13 we do an analysis of the data to determine
14 which schools would benefit from our services
15 the most, and provide targeted assistance, but
16 not ignoring those schools that also may not
17 be at the lowest end of the achievement scale,
18 but targeting intensive support to those that
19 greatly need it the most.

20 Also, helping schools and
21 districts use data systems to track student
22 performance and identify areas of need, design

1 policies, and evaluate impact. One effort
2 that we are currently involved in is
3 developing our statewide longitudinal data
4 system to better track students, and not just
5 students, but teachers as well, and what is
6 going on in districts and schools, and
7 creating reporting mechanisms to eliminate the
8 burden of schools and districts creating those
9 reports themselves. So, the data systems to
10 track student performance as well as teacher
11 effectiveness is something that we are working
12 on very deliberately right now.

13 Establish guidelines for literacy
14 coaches, interventionists, speech/language
15 pathologists, as well as library media
16 specialists, and appraisal staff in the school
17 to support literacy efforts. So that it is
18 not just the classroom teacher or the reading
19 specialist or the interventionist, but that it
20 is a broad approach, and that these folks with
21 expertise also serve on the literacy
22 improvement team or the school improvement

1 team -- we use those terms synonymously in
2 Louisiana -- but that it builds on expertise
3 of all of these folks.

4 Developing a pipeline of strong
5 leaders and teachers, and creating, for
6 example, to incentivize and recruit and retain
7 effective leaders and teachers in these
8 districts. When we say "effective", we mean
9 those teachers and leaders that are able to
10 produce results based on student achievement
11 data.

12 Now here is one way or one example
13 of a role we played to promote data collection
14 and utilization and provide responsive, timely
15 feedback. This Literacy Capacity Survey that
16 we created is linked to the components in our
17 plan, and we have found this to be very
18 critical and crucial to the implementation of
19 our plan.

20 We ask teachers and leaders to
21 complete this survey. This is just a sample
22 of the first two components of items. It is

1 not so important for you to see the exact
2 items, but for you to know that a Literacy
3 Capacity Survey is important and can help
4 inform efforts, and that that capacity survey
5 should be linked to the comprehensive literacy
6 plan in your states.

7 We wanted to create something that
8 was innovative. We didn't want to create just
9 another survey where teachers would say, "Just
10 another survey to complete?", but that would
11 actually inform changes in your thinking. And
12 it worked really, really well.

13 The way that the teachers and
14 leaders completed this form, it engaged them
15 in conversations when they received the
16 results back. We summarized the results for
17 them, once again eliminating the burden for
18 them to do so. We summarized the results and
19 provided some recommendations, and at the same
20 time we also encouraged them to analyze the
21 results and recommendations that we suggested
22 for them, to have engaging conversations about

1 how to improve certain areas of their own
2 literacy efforts. So, it helped them narrow
3 their focus on components or features of their
4 own literacy efforts that they should and need
5 to improve.

6 Their thinking, as they engaged in
7 completing this survey over time, because they
8 completed it some locations more than once,
9 their thinking on the terms that are within
10 here because the terms could mean different
11 things to different folks, and that was okay
12 with us in the beginning. But the bigger
13 picture was getting them engaged in
14 conversations to talk about those elements
15 that, once again, extended their learning and
16 understanding of what a quality literacy
17 effort looks like.

18 So, in all, this literacy capacity
19 survey was an instructional tool for us. It
20 wasn't at first, but what we did soon come to
21 discover, it is an instructional tool for the
22 site because it actually got them engaged in

1 what was in our plan upfront by completing the
2 literacy survey.

3 So, how can this program support
4 transition to the common standards? Well, one
5 way is to ensure that the comprehensive
6 literacy plan addresses the concepts and
7 skills in the Common Core Standards. And as
8 Dr. Kamil mentioned this morning, reading and
9 writing in content areas differ. So, the
10 Common Core Standards do a very good job of
11 addressing that issue.

12 Adapting high-quality
13 instructional materials that align to the
14 standards, and helping districts and schools
15 adopt those instructional materials as well.

16 Provide professional development
17 and in-class support to help teachers
18 implement the standards. We are in the
19 process right now of creating some awareness
20 sessions to help teachers understand what it
21 is they will be expected to teach when the
22 Common Core Standards do roll out and how does

1 that compare to what they are currently
2 teaching in the classrooms.

3 Educate parents and community
4 members on the purpose, aim, and content of
5 the standards, not just teachers, but
6 community outreach to help others understand
7 these content standards.

8 Embed progress monitoring on the
9 standards and make data, once again, available
10 to drive continuous improvement. Make
11 resources readily available online as well to
12 all educators.

13 Finally, in meeting the needs of
14 diverse learners, some considerations to take
15 into account, and that we are, indeed, doing
16 in Louisiana, is to include a comprehensive
17 learning support system that addresses
18 classroom-based approaches, family and
19 community engagement in interventions that
20 facilitate literacy and learning with
21 accommodations for limited-English-proficient
22 students, children with disabilities, and

1 disadvantaged students as well.

2 Another way we are meeting the
3 needs of diverse learners is in our plan we do
4 provide clear actionable steps in our plan
5 that address the needs of diverse learners, so
6 that teachers can see a progression for
7 meeting these needs. In our plan, for
8 example, we have action steps that fall under
9 one of four progressions. That is, beginning
10 a plan, beginning to implement, expanding
11 emphasis, and sustaining the plan. So, we
12 have clear actions underneath each of those
13 categories to assist schools and districts.

14 Recommend resources that provide
15 guidance and support; for example,
16 differentiated instructional strategies;
17 technology tools, as someone mentioned this
18 morning; assistive technology tools to help
19 meet the needs of diverse learners, and multi-
20 sensory approaches.

21 Also, not just extended time for
22 learning, but extended opportunities for

1 learning as well, and not just after-school
2 programs, but educationally-rich after-school
3 programs and summer learning for these
4 students.

5 Ensure that professional
6 development is tied to enhancing teacher
7 capacity and tied and linked to their specific
8 needs, so that that professional learning that
9 teachers are engaged in is specific and
10 tailored to their needs.

11 Establish better data and
12 information reports about these children. We
13 are, once again, doing that through our
14 longitudinal data system, once again
15 eliminating the burden typically placed on
16 districts and schools.

17 And one other way we are doing
18 that is we are looking very carefully at what
19 we have asked districts and schools to do
20 previously and what we will be asking them to
21 do, and streamlining that effort across all
22 lines, once again, to eliminate burden.

1 So, I think that is it. Thank you
2 very much.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. TYE: Good afternoon.

5 And I would like to echo the
6 sentiments my colleagues have said all day,
7 all morning. It is a real pleasure, and I
8 want to thank Deborah and the Department for
9 inviting me here to participate in this panel.

10 They saved, I guess, the
11 practitioner's voice for last. Because, as
12 you heard from Dr. Harris, I'm a school-based
13 person at heart. So, I am going to share a
14 little bit perhaps a different perspective as
15 we look at this initiative and, hopefully, can
16 add to the comments that my colleagues have
17 shared all day.

18 I think that one of the things
19 that was very, very clear in all the
20 presentations is that this is all about
21 connections. It is a deliberate,
22 collaborative effort across the state, the

1 district, the school, and the classroom to
2 ensure that we have a high-quality reading
3 instructional program.

4 And so, as we look at our
5 instructional program, we know that it has to
6 be a cohesive system that involves the dynamic
7 interplay between assessment, teaching, and
8 effective student learning. It maintains as
9 a priority a focus upon student development of
10 the reading process, yet, simultaneously, a
11 focus upon the development of reading
12 comprehension.

13 To accommodate both of these goals
14 from grade pre-K for us through grade 12,
15 although I know we are going to birth through
16 12, the content of reading instruction needs
17 to be comprehensive in its scope. And so,
18 there is a numerous number of reading
19 components that must comprise a student's
20 daily instruction. And I have heard
21 throughout the day many of those components
22 are similar across all the different plans and

1 proposals that some of these experts have
2 shared with us.

3 Decisions regarding instruction
4 for each of the essential components are
5 systematically guided by a set of tangible
6 assessments -- so we need those assessments --
7 and data to guide what our instruction is.
8 And it needs to reflect the extent of the
9 student learning in each one of those
10 components. So, it needs to be connected.

11 You can tell I am not as
12 technology-savvy as my colleagues here.

13 I am going to talk a little bit
14 about Florida's literacy plan. I feel blessed
15 to be a part of this State that has some very
16 rich infrastructure that really assists the
17 districts in looking at all aspects of
18 instruction, but particularly we are going to
19 talk about literacy.

20 And we believe, as many of you do,
21 that the key to effective literacy, no matter
22 what that looks like in your district, in your

1 state, is effective teaching. We have to look
2 at what is going on in the classroom and what
3 supports are we providing.

4 So, to provide support for our
5 teachers, what the State provides for the
6 districts to use is a structure for leadership
7 that allows us to constantly monitor and look
8 at what is happening in our comprehensive
9 plan. They provide resources to all the
10 districts that is available to us to access as
11 we need to, based on our structure and
12 district.

13 There is an infrastructure in the
14 State of Florida for data collection that I
15 think is much richer than many other states
16 out there. We have the ability to look at our
17 data, the formative assessments, across all
18 different levels and make some very informed
19 instructional decisions as a result.

20 The State offers a systematic
21 professional development opportunity that we
22 can access either through resources or through

1 actually tapping the State. And that
2 systematic professional development is based
3 on the data that we see and what is it that
4 our teachers and our students need. So, it is
5 prescribed. It is very focused, depending
6 upon what that data is showing us.

7 We have easy access to reading
8 research. And I am going to show you another
9 slide, some specific structured supports that
10 the State provides for the districts.

11 We have clear student achievement
12 goals that are embedded in our State literacy
13 plan. And again, we are using the data
14 analysis to help us drive the decisionmaking
15 at the district levels.

16 So, let's talk specifically about
17 those State support structures. As I
18 indicated earlier, we have a robust State
19 infrastructure for data. We are looking now,
20 as we are blessed to be a part of the Race to
21 the Top, to further enhance that
22 infrastructure. In the districts we know what

1 a great, powerful tool it is, but is it giving
2 us the data that we want? So, we are really
3 looking at enhancing that infrastructure to be
4 more specific to our needs. That is ongoing
5 now.

6 The State has the Florida Center
7 for Reading Research, which allows us that
8 access to reading research. It is a key to
9 what we do in the districts. So, when we are
10 looking at materials that we need to purchase,
11 we are looking at how we are rolling out our
12 comprehensive reading plan. That is a
13 resource for us.

14 We have a formative assessment
15 that the State puts out called the Florida
16 Assessment for Instruction in Reading, the
17 FAIR assessment, that districts have the
18 ability to tap into. I would tell you that,
19 overwhelmingly -- we are in our second year of
20 FAIR -- the assessment, it is three times a
21 year. It is done online. And every single
22 student in every single one of our schools --

1 and I have 250 in the District of Hillsborough
2 County -- access this formative assessment.

3 We are finding some great
4 correlation to our State assessment, and it
5 has been a wonderful instructional tool for
6 us.

7 We had, prior to FAIR, and we
8 still are using, the Progress Monitoring and
9 Reporting Network, which is another assessment
10 system that allows us to make good
11 instructional decisions based on data, and, of
12 course, like many of the states, provides us
13 some great supports around response to
14 intervention, RtI, what those interventions
15 are, and helping us with establishing them,
16 and then supporting that throughout.

17 I am going to talk a little bit
18 more now about how it looks like in the
19 District. So, I wanted to paint for you what
20 I am able to avail myself as a District
21 instructional leader.

22 We have a comprehensive reading

1 plan that every district is required to write
2 and present to the State, but it is tailored
3 to the needs of each one of our districts.
4 The State of Florida is comprised of 67 county
5 school districts. So, as Dr. Harris when he
6 introduced me indicated, we are the eighth
7 largest district in the country, but the third
8 largest in the State of Florida, serving over
9 192,000 students.

10 So, my comprehensive reading plan
11 is going to look very, very different than
12 other colleagues in the State because we are
13 of all different sizes and shapes.
14 Hillsborough County has approximately 56
15 percent of its student body that qualify for
16 free and reduced lunch. So, we are a very
17 unique district in the fact that we are urban,
18 suburban, and rural all in one district
19 county.

20 So, when we are looking at our
21 comprehensive reading plan, the four key
22 elements that the State outlines in its

1 structure are centered around the bullets that
2 I have in front of you.

3 District leadership, it's a
4 required element in our plan. How are we in
5 the District going to support the efforts that
6 our schools are embarking on in this
7 comprehensive reading plan.

8 So, we meet on a monthly basis.
9 As the instructional leader of the District,
10 I am a part of that team. So, the District
11 leadership team provides the support and
12 resources that the school sites need in order
13 to roll out their reading plans at the school
14 level.

15 The school leadership is key, and
16 that starts with the principal at the school
17 site. The leadership that we have in each one
18 of our 250 school sites, there is a reading
19 coach that sits on each one of our school
20 leadership teams. So, the reading leadership
21 team at those school sites is critical in
22 addressing the specific needs for that school,

1 because, again, we are a very diverse
2 District. So, each school has different needs
3 based on their demographics.

4 Professional development is very,
5 very key in all of our plans. So, as I
6 painted the picture for you, it starts with
7 what the State provides for us and our
8 teachers have access to. But, certainly, as
9 part of our comprehensive reading plan and the
10 categorical dollars that come with it, the
11 lion's share of that is in very prescribed,
12 focused professional development. That starts
13 at the district level, but is certainly
14 funneled down all the way to the school level,
15 depending upon what their needs are.

16 So, schools have the ability to
17 craft what they believe their professional
18 development plan should look like, based on
19 the needs of their students and the data that
20 is reflecting that.

21 And again, I start at the bottom
22 as student achievement, but that really should

1 be at the top because everything that we do is
2 based on student learning. So, what our
3 students need and how we can get them to
4 achieve to their maximum, all students, is
5 what helped drive our goals in our reading
6 plan.

7 The other thing that is critical
8 in our comprehensive reading plan, or,
9 actually, in any plan that we are putting out
10 there, I think a colleague this morning in the
11 public speaking brought up the issue of
12 ensuring that this initiative, this
13 comprehensive look at literacy, allows the
14 districts the flexibility to be able to align
15 what we are already doing with whatever this
16 plan is.

17 So, for us, currently, making sure
18 that the comprehensive reading plan aligns
19 with whatever the Title I reading plans may
20 be, our school improvement plans not only in
21 the Title I schools, but certainly in all of
22 our schools a school improvement plan is

1 required.

2 Differentiated accountability that
3 the State requires for some of our schools
4 that are not performing or meeting AYP, as
5 aligned in their plans. So, making sure that
6 our comprehensive reading plan is in
7 conjunction with and not layered on top of
8 everything else that we are doing is critical
9 in our plans.

10 And then, the other piece that I
11 think is important is the leverage of
12 resources, our funds. And one of my
13 colleagues said this morning, talked about
14 that sustainability piece.

15 The comprehensive reading plan
16 that we have access to through the State is a
17 small piece of what our actual literacy plan
18 is. To actually put dollars to that, our
19 literacy comprehensive reading plan for the
20 '10/11 school year is about \$25 million worth,
21 and a fraction, relatively a sixth of that
22 figure, is what we actually get with the

1 categorical dollars from the comprehensive
2 reading plan.

3 So, I share that just to say that,
4 when we sit down and write our plan, we are
5 writing a plan to meet the needs of our
6 diverse student population. We start with
7 that. Then, my job, as the instructional
8 leader, is to find the dollars, the resources
9 to make that happen.

10 So, whether that be in programs or
11 in personnel, in data systems, in technology,
12 we write the plan, and then I find the
13 resources to make that plan come to life. So,
14 that involves breaking down some silos in many
15 of our districts. Title I sits in another
16 division than where I sit. Instructional
17 technology sits in another place. Career and
18 technical is another funding source, looking
19 at Perkins dollars and supplemental academic
20 instruction.

21 So, really being able to levy all
22 the resources available to you to sustain

1 whatever plan it is that you put in place I
2 think is critical.

3 I am going to share briefly our
4 Literacy Design Collaborative for Hillsborough
5 County. We are blessed to have been granted
6 a grant with the Gates Foundation centering
7 around literacy design. It basically is not
8 a program; it is a process; it is a framework
9 by which we look at how we can get kids to
10 critically think and critically and
11 argumentatively write, which so aligned with
12 what the Common Core Standards are going to
13 do.

14 So, we see the Literacy Design
15 Collaborative as an integral part in how we
16 are going to roll out our plans for literacy
17 across all content areas. That framework is
18 grounded, as I said, in critical reading,
19 analytical thinking, implementation of civil
20 discourse, a Socratic seminar piece, and
21 creation of writing products that are
22 specified as part of that Common Core

Standards.

Our components are included.

Think of a plug-and-play. So, it is a template that allows you, that's the template task that allows you to look at a prompt and you plug in the content, whether that is science, social science, ELA, and then focusing your students on what they should do and what those products should be as a result of it.

There's a scoring rubric for the template task that describes and connects the demands and qualities established by those Common Core Standards, and the template module, which is a unit that provides an instructional ladder to organize instruction based on the instructional demands of the template task. So, that is just a piece of how we instructionally are carrying out and looking at how we are going to implement those Common Core Standards.

A couple of things that we would

1 like to see with the Striving Readers Grant,
2 and I want to kind of really explain what
3 eliminate the strict research means. As I
4 have talked to my colleagues, as we have
5 looked at the Striving Readers Grant before,
6 some of the other components that were in it,
7 it is that we want to ensure that there is
8 flexibility, first of all, to those districts,
9 but this research design, that it doesn't
10 eliminate or exclude different groups of
11 students. So, that whatever we are looking at
12 doing, we are looking at all of our student
13 populations and that we are not eliminating,
14 kind of creating a has or has not type of a
15 situation.

16 We want to focus on effective
17 teaching rather than purchase analysis of
18 specific reading programs. We want to look at
19 more of a process by which we are improving
20 reading instruction in our District or in our
21 State, rather than a particular program that
22 is going to meet that need, not looking at a

1 silver bullet, but a way to comprehensively
2 look at the needs of our populations.

3 Focus on the job embedded and
4 preventional development, follow-up support,
5 and instructional delivery. We are hoping for
6 it to support technology and materials
7 conforming to the universal designs for
8 learning principles -- we heard a lot in a lot
9 of the presentations today about that
10 instructional technology -- including an
11 integrated assessment system. Assessments,
12 again, have been a common theme throughout the
13 day today.

14 Rigorous accountability measures
15 and fidelity checks, those formative
16 assessments that lead to that summative
17 assessment are critical. I believe the
18 professors this morning talked about that.

19 So, I want to again thank you for
20 the opportunity to share our thoughts with you
21 from a district's perspective. We are excited
22 about the possibilities that this

1 comprehensive plan is going to bring and as it
2 is going to connect with the literacy plans of
3 not just the State of Florida and the District
4 of Hillsborough County, but that many of our
5 districts and the states are already working
6 on.

7 So, thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 DR. HARRIS: Okay. We want to
10 thank our panelists for their presentations.
11 So, great job.

12 We have just a few moments that we
13 can have sort of a brief discussion between
14 our guest panelists here and our experts.

15 So, at this time, I am going to
16 ask, Dr. Jones, do you have a question you
17 would like share?

18 MS. JONES: I also want to thank
19 the panelists for sharing your experience and
20 expertise. It has been tremendously helpful
21 to us.

22 Deborah mentioned that one of the

1 unique aspects of Striving Readers is that we
2 are looking at a birth-through-grade-12 age
3 span. So, I just want to push us down a
4 little to take a look at, from your
5 perspective, looking at diverse learners, how
6 do you see this vision of birth through, let's
7 say, age 3?

8 Do you have in Florida and
9 Louisiana standards, early learning standards,
10 for birth to 3? What kind of assessments
11 would be appropriate? I just want to get us
12 thinking about what that looks like, what a
13 comprehensive literacy program looks like for
14 young children, especially young children who
15 are diverse learners.

16 DR. SLACK: Well, working with
17 birth through 3 in Louisiana, and I'm pretty
18 sure across the country, it is a new nuance
19 for many state departments. We typically, or
20 we have up to this point, primarily worked
21 with preschool and through grade 12. So, the
22 last six months especially, we have been

1 working very carefully and closely with those
2 other agencies and entities that work with
3 birth to 3, children in birth to 4; for
4 example, the DSS, which is now the Department
5 of Children and Family Services, DHH. And we
6 are in the process of developing an integrated
7 professional development system which includes
8 assessment, which includes standards.

9 We don't have any formal standards
10 yet with birth to 3. We do have draft
11 standards for birth to 3. DCFS is primarily
12 taking the lead on that, but we at the
13 Department are very engaged in the development
14 of that process, and tying it to our preschool
15 standards, which, by the way, have been
16 drafted and have been backmapped from the
17 Common Core Standards, the K standards, the
18 kindergarten standards.

19 So, we do have a draft out for
20 public review now on our kindergarten
21 standards. And our next step is to take the
22 pre-K standards and backmap to the zero to 3.

1 But it has been interesting
2 because these different agencies don't
3 typically work very closely together to
4 address the learning needs of zero to 3 in a
5 comprehensive way. So, we have learned a lot
6 by going through that process, in the past six
7 months especially.

8 MS. TYE: I probably can't speak
9 as specific as Dr. Slack just did because I am
10 coming from a district perspective. So, I am
11 going to have to rely on some colleagues that
12 perhaps will speak during the public speaking.

13 But I do know that Florida does
14 have voluntary pre-K for 4-year-olds. So, I
15 certainly think that, as we look at those
16 assessments, and we always do now, concentrate
17 on students in our Head Start and our 3- and
18 4-year-olds.

19 But the birth to 3, probably the
20 best place that we go, we have Early Steps
21 because of the Part C to Part B students, in
22 talking about our students with disabilities.

1 So, we have some structures in place that I
2 believe would be a place for us to start and
3 build upon, but I don't believe we have
4 anything formal and standardized for those
5 birth to 3.

6 So, I think, like many of us,
7 that's why I love the colleague's comment this
8 morning about having some flexibility perhaps
9 by how we would use those funds, 15 percent
10 being birth to 3, because I think many of us,
11 that would be an area that we would want to
12 focus on.

13 Because if I was to say where
14 there would be like a fatal flaw or a little
15 pain point, it would be, what do we have that
16 is structured for that birth-to-3 program?
17 So, in the State of Florida, that's where I
18 believe we are at, and my colleagues in
19 Florida can correct me if I'm not dead-on.

20 DR. PULLEN: And I can actually
21 comment on this just a little bit, not from a
22 state's perspective, in terms of what we in

1 Virginia are doing as a State. But I am
2 actually working on a project in the far
3 southwest region of the State, in Virginia,
4 which is a high poverty area. It is
5 considered the coal field region.

6 And we are actually working across
7 agencies in healthcare, education, and
8 economic develop to create a replicable model
9 of early language and literacy for children
10 birth through age 3. So, we are actually
11 going into the homes and providing in-home
12 training to parents, working with parents to
13 teach them how to increase the quality and
14 quantity of language interaction in the home.
15 And we are looking at how we can, then, link
16 that later with preschool and go all the way
17 through.

18 And one of the things that is
19 interesting as I have been working on this
20 project is that there are a lot of individual
21 agencies and groups working in this area, but
22 there is not an effort that brings everyone

1 together. Everyone is doing separate. You
2 know, they have this little region is getting
3 this intervention, and this agency is working
4 here. And I think there needs to be some
5 effort in bringing everyone together so that
6 we have the same goal in mind and pooling
7 resources, instead of doing a little bit here,
8 piecemeal here and there.

9 The good news is we have had some
10 success in the pilot project that we have been
11 working on with the families. We are excited
12 about what we are doing with the individual
13 families who are benefitting from this
14 intervention at the moment.

15 DR. HARRIS: Okay. Deborah, do
16 you have any questions?

17 MS. SPITZ: They have asked us to
18 get up and speak into the microphone.

19 Because this program is birth to
20 grade 12, and I asked this this morning, too,
21 but we talk a lot about alignment and
22 articulation across all the grade levels.

1 From each of your perspectives, I would like
2 to hear a little bit more about, what are the
3 key aspects of really aligning for birth to
4 12? You know, we can talk about that, but how
5 do we that?

6 And then, particularly looking at
7 those key, those difficult transition points,
8 whether it is pre-K to K, three to four,
9 middle to high school, how do we kind of
10 smooth and align those difficult transition
11 points?

12 DR. SLACK: Well, in Louisiana, to
13 address this question, we have three pieces of
14 our large comprehensive plan. We have a birth
15 through pre-K plan, K to three, and four-
16 twelve.

17 So, over a year ago, we
18 established task forces to help us with those
19 different pieces of our plan, not knowing
20 whether or not SRCL or this comprehensive
21 effort would occur.

22 But, for the sake of improving our

1 current, what was our K-12 plan, we had a K-12
2 State plan in place, but it didn't address
3 early learning, and our adolescent piece of
4 that plan, it wasn't very strong.

5 So, we created these task forces
6 with expertise that served on the task forces
7 to help us inform the plan. So, when SRCL
8 came out and we needed to established a State
9 literacy team, what we did was we selected
10 folks that served on each of these task forces
11 to serve on our State Literacy Team that were
12 familiar with the drafts that we have in
13 place.

14 And from there, what we are doing
15 is we are looking at the draft. We are
16 looking at connecting the outputs of the
17 birth-to-pre-K piece with the inputs of the
18 K-three piece, and the outputs of the K-three
19 piece with the inputs of the four-to-twelve
20 piece. So, we are looking very carefully and
21 closely at that transition and alignment
22 across the entire plan.

1 MS. TYE: And from a District
2 perspective, that is exactly what we do for
3 now K-12. From the K-12 reading plan that is
4 established in the District, it is done
5 vertically. So, as we are writing the plan --
6 and I've got those folks, the frontline folks
7 that are implementing it, the supervisors for
8 those various levels -- that is exactly what
9 we look at.

10 We look at what the output is, the
11 primary, as we move into intermediate, and
12 that becomes that input. So that there is a
13 vertical articulation going up and it is
14 seamless, and everyone is understanding what
15 that looks like.

16 DR. PULLEN: And I think
17 considering kids with disabilities and
18 identifying kids with disabilities and
19 responsiveness to intervention is another
20 piece that I think we need to link across.

21 Much of the research in
22 responsiveness to intervention has been

1 conducted at the elementary level, a little
2 bit in the early childhood years, and a little
3 bit in secondary years. But linking that
4 together and making sure that we have clear
5 connections with the interventions across the
6 ages, and that individuals who are teachers,
7 in-service teachers, who are meeting the needs
8 of kids and adolescents actually have the
9 knowledge and skills in reading.

10 You know, we move from a point
11 where we are preparing to learn to read.
12 Then, we're learning to read. And then, we're
13 reading to learn.

14 And once we hit upper elementary,
15 middle school, and high school, much of the
16 instruction in reading has shifted to reading
17 to learn. We need to make sure that we have
18 interventions across the grades and that we
19 prepare teachers in the upper grades and
20 secondary schools to meet the needs of kids
21 who have disabilities or who are struggling to
22 learn reading skills, even if they are lower

1 on that ladder. So, even if they have
2 phonemic awareness and decoding skill issues,
3 that we are still intervening at the right
4 place with age-appropriate materials.

5 DR. HARRIS: Well, I would like to
6 ask sort of a follow-up question, particularly
7 around, given that this is a K-12 initiative,
8 and we all know that we have high school
9 students that are struggling with literacy
10 skills, what strategies are we using or
11 focusing on to make sure that we do include
12 that group of 12th-graders that need it or 11-
13 graders, the high school students that these
14 kids should be at the stage where you
15 described as reading to learn, but we all know
16 so many of them are not?

17 So, how do we make sure we don't
18 leave that group of kids out of this
19 initiative?

20 DR. PULLEN: I think a lot of it
21 goes back to professional development for high
22 school teachers, teachers who are working. In

1 high school, we have teachers, excellent
2 teachers, who were prepared in their content
3 area and have had some education course work,
4 but may not have had reading course work on
5 actually how to teach reading. Yet, we have
6 kids who get to that point or enter our
7 districts who are at that level.

8 So, making sure that we provide
9 opportunities for teachers at the high school
10 level to actually learn how to teach reading
11 to kids who may not have those foundational
12 skills, I think that is a piece of it.

13 And again, linking back all the
14 way across from having our plan start early
15 and, if we think remediation versus
16 intervention versus prevention, if we have a
17 solid plan in place trying to prevent, and
18 have fewer kids who actually get to that point
19 that are in high school that are still at the
20 decoding level.

21 I think I mentioned when I was
22 going through what we should assess and

1 diagnose and teach. Once we get to, again,
2 upper elementary, middle, and high school,
3 many of the assessments and interventions are
4 focused on fluency and comprehension. We need
5 to make sure that those assessments are
6 actually comprehensive, so that we intervene
7 in the right place for those kids.

8 MS. TYE: And I would only add
9 that I think in the conversation this morning,
10 that's another place for us to really look at
11 supplementing how we are teaching it with some
12 of the technology and other ways to engage
13 that 12-grade non-reader. It has to look and
14 feel and be very different for them to stay
15 engaged in that process. So, that is where we
16 tend to really look at some of those
17 supplemental programs that are more
18 technology-based that can assist us with that.

19 DR. SLACK: I'm going to address
20 that question in a couple of ways. To build
21 on what Dr. Pullen said, starting early with
22 prevention. In Louisiana, we tested an

1 approach, a K-12 approach. We found that
2 having different programs out there, different
3 levels, we have not had as much success as
4 when we had continuity and consistency across
5 the grade levels.

6 So, we have a pilot program in
7 place in our State that is called the K-12
8 Pilot Program. So, what this involves is a
9 feeder system where a collection of schools,
10 an elementary school, a middle school, and a
11 high school, apply for some State funding to
12 implement the components of our plan and best
13 practices in literacy.

14 What we found is not just at their
15 one particular level do they collaborate and
16 coordinate, they collaborate with other levels
17 of the system. We have seen great success by
18 doing that.

19 So, I would encourage, if at all
20 possible, a feeder system where units apply
21 together. We are now conceptualizing that in
22 our zero-to-pre-K plan, having those sites

1 collaborate and coordinate more with early
2 childcare centers and Early Head Start and
3 Heat Start in their districts. So, a feeder
4 system in which you can promote continuity and
5 consistency in the concept and ideas across
6 all grade levels has been very, very
7 important.

8 And also, just to zero-in on that
9 intervention factor at the high school level,
10 we do double-dosing for these students. In
11 addition to extended time for literacy across
12 the curriculum and across the school day,
13 double-dosing for these students where they
14 get electives, Carnegie credits as well, so
15 that they don't lose any credits.

16 DR. HARRIS: Okay. Let me ask my
17 guest panelists, do you have any additional
18 questions?

19 MS. JONES: Sure. Never give up
20 an opportunity to ask a question.

21 (Laughter.)

22 You know, Dr. Pullen, you talked

1 about the workforce in general. I want to
2 sort of think about this in this broad
3 context, again, of birth to grade 12 and think
4 about the capacity that states will have to
5 really provide the kind of teacher preparation
6 and ongoing professional development for a
7 workforce that really could increase the
8 literacy skills of children birth to grade 12.

9 So, I guess I'm asking, what is
10 your thinking around what we need and maybe at
11 your state level as far as making sure that we
12 have the workforce that can really do the job
13 for this initiative?

14 DR. SLACK: Well, we connect very
15 closely with our institutions of higher
16 education and our teacher preparation programs
17 as well.

18 What we did a few years back is we
19 developed some reading competencies in which
20 we reviewed each of the teacher preparation
21 programs in our State, not just the colleges,
22 but all teacher preparation programs, and how

1 well they prepared students to be teachers of
2 literacy, for example, and not just teachers
3 of literacy, but classroom teachers.

4 And what we found is that those
5 programs needed some intervention and creating
6 quality course work to help teachers become
7 better prepared for teaching literacy.

8 It wasn't an easy process at
9 first. Of course, you know, working with
10 colleges and universities, the State coming in
11 and sharing with them what we thought needed
12 to happen was not an easy thing. But it has
13 transitioned or segued into a much better
14 relationship.

15 And right now, what we do have in
16 place are much stronger teacher preparation
17 programs as a result of this process. We do
18 today still coordinate and collaborate very
19 carefully and closely with our Board of
20 Regents. We have college professors that work
21 very closely with us on our plan, and the
22 deans of education meet monthly, and we inform

1 them of where we are in our literacy efforts
2 on a regular, ongoing basis.

3 We feed information into them, and
4 we take their insights and use their
5 information to help feed into ours. But we
6 are very closely connected in Louisiana.

7 DR. PULLEN: I can talk a little
8 bit about what we are doing at the University
9 of Virginia in terms of our teacher
10 preparation that I think helps with this K-12,
11 at least in the area of special education, and
12 actually it overlaps.

13 All of our special education
14 programs at UVA are now dual endorsement
15 programs. So, when students come into special
16 education, they are dually-endorsed and they
17 take a track. So, they are certified K
18 through 12 special education, but they pick a
19 track, either elementary or secondary. So
20 that when they leave, they actually have
21 endorsement in both general ed and special ed.

22 So, for example, the students who

1 will be secondary teachers, so if they are a
2 biology major at the college, then they would
3 enter the secondary track in the special
4 education program, and they would be prepared.
5 So, they get the same reading courses that a
6 student who is teaching elementary school
7 would get. So, they actually are highly-
8 qualified. They leave with the ability to
9 become highly-qualified in science education
10 and have special education.

11 So that, our goal is that, when
12 our teachers leave, when our students
13 graduate, that they are actually endorsed with
14 general ed and special ed, and they have the
15 tools necessary to meet the needs of kids in
16 their classroom, regardless of whether they
17 have or do not have a disability.

18 I think the fact that our
19 secondary teachers are actually getting
20 elementary reading is a benefit to those
21 students who are going to end up teaching our
22 secondary students, and actually in the course

1 work reading development, reading diagnosis,
2 reading remediation, and actually tutor
3 elementary students in reading. Then, they
4 are going to be going in and teaching high
5 school biology.

6 MS. TYE: And I would like to give
7 all of them my card to recruit them to
8 Florida.

9 (Laughter.)

10 Because it sounds like that is a
11 wonderful opportunity.

12 And I will talk about what happens
13 when they come to us. Part of the Empowering
14 Effective Teachers Project that Hillsborough
15 County has been working on, it looks very
16 similar to a lot of the Race to the Top
17 initiative.

18 We have a two-year induction
19 program that right now this is the first class
20 that is now getting reading endorsement, which
21 is what our State offers as part of their
22 induction program.

1 So, our hope, our goal is -- we
2 have approximately 640 new teachers this year,
3 and that is an average that we have about
4 every year -- is to start to get that
5 workforce, those new teachers coming in, very
6 sound in literacy and provide that training
7 for the reading endorsement, so that they
8 become better literacy teachers regardless of
9 their content expertise.

10 So, that is just something that
11 Hillsborough County is beginning this school
12 year with our new inductees, our new class, so
13 to speak, of teachers.

14 DR. HARRIS: Well, it would be
15 nice if we had more time to stay in this
16 conversation, but we do need to transition.

17 So, let's give our panelists
18 another hand.

19 (Applause.)

20 Thank you.

21 So, at this time, we are going to
22 take a five-minute transition. Then, we are

1 going to come back for our public comment
2 period. So, we will start five minutes from
3 now.

4 So, if you plan to speak for the
5 record, make sure that you have registered out
6 front, so that when we come back, we will
7 start with our speakers that are signed up and
8 we will do it in the order that they have
9 signed up.

10 So, five minutes.

11 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter
12 went off the record at 2:42 p.m. and went back
13 on the record at 2:49 p.m.)

14 MS. NEWSOME-JOHNSON: We are going
15 to open it up for our public speakers now. We
16 will have our first speaker.

17 MR. KRATZ: Thank you.

18 My name is Jeff Kratz. I'm with
19 the American Library Association.

20 ALA is the world's oldest and
21 largest library association. It represents
22 over 63,000 libraries of all types.

1 The Striving Readers Comprehensive
2 Literacy Program was established to advance
3 literacy skills for birth to grade 12. This
4 is a longstanding goal of libraries, of the
5 over 96,000 at public schools.

6 To help ensure the success of the
7 SRCL discretionary grant program, the American
8 Library Association encourages the Department
9 to include benefits utilizing and partnering
10 with public school libraries.

11 Research shows that children get
12 ready to read years before they start school.
13 In countless communities across the country,
14 a public library is a place where children's
15 literacy education begins. While today's
16 libraries help to ensure that students
17 graduate with a 21st century education, they
18 are also the building place for fundamental
19 reading skills and to develop a love of
20 reading.

21 Public libraries open their doors
22 to new parents with story hours and other

1 programs to guide a child's literacy
2 development. Public libraries can also help
3 with parents in addressing specialized needs
4 for children as well as accommodating parents
5 who speak English as a second language.

6 Likewise, school libraries play a
7 fundamental role in students' literacy
8 development as well. While the responsibility
9 for the successful implementation of reading
10 promotion and instruction is shared by the
11 entire school community, library programs
12 serve as the hub of literacy learning in the
13 school.

14 A recent survey found that 83
15 percent of students often get their individual
16 independent reading materials from their own
17 school library. School librarians can
18 individualize reading curriculum to develop
19 reading skills for a lifelong love of reading.

20 ALA strongly recommends that the
21 Department include the benefits of utilizing
22 and partnering with public and school

1 libraries as part of SRCL's discretionary
2 grant application. We have found over and
3 over that various applications for federal
4 funds rarely take advantage of our services
5 and programs unless efforts are made perfectly
6 clear and applications and use of funds are
7 statutory definitions.

8 Accordingly, to help SRCL
9 discretionary grantees realize their goals,
10 their forthcoming state comprehensive literacy
11 plans, ALA asks that the Department of
12 Education include as part of its notice
13 inviting application provisions that ensure
14 that public libraries are explicitly described
15 as public, nonprofit organizations/agencies
16 with a proven track record of effectiveness in
17 improving early literacy development from
18 birth all the way to kindergarten.

19 Also, ALA would like the
20 Department of Education to recognize that
21 local education agencies are encouraged to
22 develop applications in conjunction with

1 school library programs.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. COOPER: I'm Ginny Cooper. I
4 serve as the Chief Librarian for the District
5 of Columbia, and I also am here in my capacity
6 as the State Librarian for the District of
7 Columbia.

8 I come to make two points. First,
9 public libraries everywhere are doing exactly
10 the work you want to be done. Children's
11 librarians are trained childhood educators,
12 early childhood and school-age children as
13 well. We work with children at home, at
14 daycare centers, in community centers, and, of
15 course in libraries. You have the opportunity
16 to support this work and strengthen the
17 coordination among schools and other agencies.

18 Second, requiring that state
19 libraries serve as participants in the grant
20 planning process -- it happens in a number of
21 states already, but it is not a requirement
22 and often doesn't happen -- would extend the

1 reach of this important work even further.

2 First, some examples of good work
3 done in libraries:

4 In the District, infant and
5 toddler storytimes as well as other preschool
6 programs are held at least weekly in all 24
7 libraries in the District. Attendance ranges
8 from 10 or fewer to 90 or more. Now 90 is too
9 many, of course, and I'll tell you what we do
10 at the Watha T. Daniel-Shaw Library, which
11 opened in early August.

12 This beautiful library serves a
13 community with lots of children and babies,
14 and it is very near a Metro station. So, now
15 one day a week, three or four storytimes are
16 done so everybody can be accommodated.
17 Fifteen minutes after the first one starts,
18 the second one goes, and then in another
19 location a third one will begin 15 minutes
20 later.

21 And we continue, so parents have
22 the opportunity to show up without

1 preregistering, that children have a chance to
2 be a part of this experience, and that our
3 staff are ready to do plenty of programs to
4 meet that important need.

5 So, this means that everybody is
6 served in a way that makes sense. And while
7 it is what we do in one library, there are
8 great examples at every other library in the
9 country, actually.

10 In Brooklyn, about seven years
11 ago, we did a program called Brooklyn Reads to
12 Babies. And I am showing you some of that,
13 the great graphics that were a part of that.

14 These flyers were distributed at
15 libraries, but, more important, printed in
16 seven languages. They were distributed at
17 churches, at other places of worship,
18 laundromats, medical waiting rooms, and more,
19 bus shelters, street banners, and at Grand
20 Army Plaza an 8-foot-high, 35-foot-long wall
21 had these great images and the strong message
22 "Read to your baby."

1 This flyer, as I said, available
2 in seven languages, also identifies some great
3 books to read, some behaviors to use when
4 you're reading, and, importantly, some of the
5 kinds of things to expect from babies and
6 young children.

7 The fact that they don't sit on
8 your lap and listen doesn't mean they are not
9 learning, for example, things like that, that
10 are important as part of that parent
11 education.

12 Libraries not only help children
13 read, they help children love to read. Here's
14 the story of one who loves books. At the
15 Martin Luther King Library just a short
16 distance from here, there is a family, one of
17 many, that visits the children's room every
18 Saturday. Brother and sister go to the
19 storytime. Mom reads to the baby. Dad helps
20 everyone choose books to take home.

21 Last Saturday -- I heard this from
22 the staff on Monday -- a nine-month-old baby

1 took his very first steps, and he took them
2 towards the board books that he had come to
3 love.

4 In addition, and you have heard
5 this from my colleague as well, excellent work
6 by the American Library Association, and
7 especially the division that supports service
8 to young children and to public libraries,
9 have worked together to create and promote the
10 importance of reading to little ones, ways to
11 do it effectively, and studies that show why
12 it matters to do so. You will likely hear
13 more about that from others this afternoon.

14 And my second point, state
15 libraries. State libraries are available in
16 every state and territory. Through state
17 libraries, you literally reach every library
18 in the nation with information and the
19 opportunities to be a part of this important
20 work. I urge you to require that
21 participation by state libraries in this
22 process.

1 Striving Readers Comprehensive
2 Literacy Program was established to advance
3 literacy skills from birth through grade 12,
4 and that is what libraries do. It is, we say
5 at the District of Columbia, our first and
6 most important work.

7 You have the opportunity to make
8 sure it happens, not just because of good
9 intentions, but on purpose.

10 Thank you for this opportunity.

11 MS. Gratale: Good afternoon.

12 My name is Daniella Gratale, and
13 I'm Manager of Advocacy of Nemours, which is
14 a premiere children's health system.

15 We thank you for the opportunity
16 to provide input on this program. Our goal at
17 Nemours is to help children grow up healthy.
18 This commitment extends beyond our work in the
19 healthcare system. We have also been
20 committed to helping children become
21 successful readers, and that means starting
22 early.

1 As my colleague mentioned this
2 morning, Nemours BrightStart! was established
3 in 2005 to address dyslexia. It is a program
4 that is targeted to pre-kindergartners and
5 kindergartners.

6 The program has three key
7 components. The first is screening for all
8 children in their pre-K year. The second is
9 small group, intensive instruction to children
10 identified as at-risk of reading failure. And
11 finally, there's rescreening after the
12 intervention is complete.

13 Two-thirds of participating at-
14 risk children move to age-appropriate range in
15 their reading readiness skills after receiving
16 the Nemours BrightStart! intervention. Our
17 experiences with this Nemours BrightStart!
18 program have informed my comments. So, my
19 comments will focus specifically on the pre-
20 kindergarten and kindergarten age range. And
21 specifically, I'll talk about the SEA and LEA
22 capacity and support as well as meeting the

1 needs of diverse learners.

2 So, first, for SEA and LEA
3 capacity and support, as states are developing
4 their literacy and determining what they will
5 require of their subgrantees, we urge you to
6 consider the following core components:

7 No. 1, age-appropriate goals and
8 strategies. Targeted goals and strategies for
9 various age groups, including preschool age
10 children, should be implemented in the state
11 plans.

12 No. 2, program selection. States
13 should provide subgrantees with guidance and
14 actually criteria on how to select an
15 effective and an evidence-informed program.

16 No. 3, training. Training of
17 teachers or of childcare providers will be
18 critical to the overall success of these
19 grants, and it should be closely linked with
20 selected curricula and teaching strategies.

21 Finally, evaluation. Grantees
22 will need to evaluate the success of their

1 programs in the short-term and, ultimately, in
2 the long-term. States should provide them
3 with information on effective evaluation
4 techniques.

5 Additionally, states should make
6 certain requirements of their subgrants.
7 These include:

8 No, 1, evidence. Subgrantees
9 should have to demonstrate that the literacy
10 program that they are investing in has some
11 evidence of effectiveness and, when possible,
12 this should include longitudinal results.

13 No. 2 is training. Subgrantees
14 should provide training to their actual
15 teachers and childcare providers who are going
16 to implement the curriculum, and they should
17 demonstrate a system to monitor implementation
18 fidelity.

19 When possible, they should also
20 consider implementing a train-the-trainer
21 model to promote sustainability.

22 Next is screening. Subgrantees

1 should select a literacy screening tool that
2 can be utilized to identify pre-reading skills
3 or reading proficiency. All young children
4 should be screened.

5 Next is small group instruction.
6 Subgrantees should provide small group,
7 intensive instruction to all children who are
8 identified at risk.

9 And finally, rescreening.
10 Subgrantees should rescreen children after the
11 program has been implemented to evaluate its
12 effectiveness and, also, to determine if
13 additional support or intervention is needed.

14 Now I would like to move on to
15 meeting the needs of diverse learners. And
16 many of the themes for this section are also
17 very consistent with what I have already said.

18 No. 1 criteria that we would
19 definitely think makes sense for meeting the
20 needs of diverse at-risk students is training.
21 Programs should incorporate targeted
22 professional development relating to the

1 characteristics and needs of diverse at-risk
2 learners. We found that sometimes teachers
3 make erroneous assumptions about the needs of
4 diverse learners. And that can include,
5 basically, thinking that they are unable to
6 learn in the mainstream setting or in some
7 cases that they can't actually teach them.

8 So, basically, Nemours
9 BrightStart! has shown us that, when needs are
10 specifically addressed through training,
11 teachers can change their belief systems.

12 Next is universal child screening
13 with parent permission. As I have previously
14 addressed, that is critical.

15 Small group instruction is also
16 critical to meeting the needs of diverse
17 learners.

18 And finally, it is very important
19 that we meet the needs of parents as well.
20 So, the subgrantees should really be focusing
21 on what their parental engagement strategies
22 are.

1 Nemours thanks you for the
2 opportunity to provide this input, and we look
3 forward to engaging with you in the future.

4 MS. LARSON: My name is Mindy
5 Larson. I work for the Institute for
6 Educational Leadership, which is a national
7 nonprofit organization dedicated to building
8 the capacity of individuals and organizations
9 in education and related fields to work
10 together across policies, programs, and
11 sectors.

12 We submit these observations and
13 recommendations regarding the Striving Readers
14 Comprehensive Literacy Grant Program as it
15 relates to meeting the needs of diverse
16 learners.

17 IEL houses the National
18 Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for
19 Youth, which is funded by the U.S. Department
20 of Labor's Office of Disability Employment
21 Policy.

22 We specifically focus on the range

1 of issues and opportunities that young people
2 need to successfully transition to adulthood,
3 and we focus on the needs of all youth, with
4 a special emphasis on youth with disabilities.

5 These recommendations reflect our
6 professional experiences working with local,
7 state, and national-level government
8 organizations, community-based youth-serving
9 organizations, and other nationally-focused
10 organizations such as the Campaign for Youth,
11 the National Youth Employment Coalition, the
12 Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination,
13 and the Consortium for Citizens with
14 Disabilities.

15 Improving the literacy skills and
16 academic achievement of all young people is of
17 great concern to the youth service
18 professionals who work with struggling leaders
19 daily in and across multiple settings and
20 service systems at the local, state, and
21 national level.

22 Low literacy is a boundary-

1 crossing problem. Therefore, it necessitates
2 a boundary-crossing strategy. As state and
3 local education agencies and subgrantees plan
4 and implement strategies to improve literacy
5 instruction across the age span, we recommend
6 that they develop strong collaborative
7 partnerships and linkages with the various
8 public agencies, community-based
9 organizations, and post-secondary institutions
10 that currently serve children and youth who
11 are struggling readers.

12 The problem of low literacy skills
13 amongst struggling readers is encountered
14 daily by the professionals who work with these
15 youth in the after-school and out-of-school
16 hours in multiple settings, including foster
17 care and independent living programs, juvenile
18 justice and delinquency prevention programs,
19 youth workforce, development, and career
20 preparation programs, college-readiness
21 programs, parks and recreation programs, and
22 leadership and community service programs,

1 just to name a few.

2 State literacy plans should take
3 into consideration the role that these other
4 youth service agencies and organizations can
5 and do play in supporting literacy development
6 among adolescents.

7 The engagement of other public
8 systems and community organizations is
9 especially critical to reaching those youth
10 who have already disengaged or dropped out of
11 the public school system.

12 To effectively motivate and
13 accelerate literacy among adolescents, states
14 and their subgrantees need to embed literacy
15 instruction in not just the academic courses
16 within a school system, but also in the
17 activities that youth participate in, both in
18 school and out of school, that teenagers find
19 most compelling and relevant to their
20 interests.

21 For most teens, career
22 exploration, job training, and work

1 experiences are primary interests. Other
2 activities they gravitate towards are sports
3 and recreation, leadership opportunities,
4 community service, arts and media projects,
5 and business and entrepreneurship activities.

6 While these activities are
7 sometimes offered during the school day or as
8 a part of classes, many teens engage in these
9 activities outside of school through
10 community-based organizations and other
11 publicly-funded programs during after-school
12 hours, on the weekends, and during the summer.

13 For this reason, states and
14 subgrantees should provide professional
15 training or extend the professional training
16 in effective literacy instruction strategies
17 that they will be offering to educators, also
18 to the youth service professionals who work
19 both within and outside the school system to
20 provide career exploration, job training, work
21 experiences, and other highly-engaging
22 activities that teenagers find relevant.

1 Many of the programs that work
2 with youth outside of the school day aim to
3 improve academic skills of the youth that are
4 participating in their programs. However,
5 their staff and volunteers often lack the
6 professional skills and knowledge of the most
7 effective evidence-based literacy instruction
8 strategies.

9 With proper training, the youth
10 service professionals and volunteers who
11 frequently interact with, mentor, and train
12 youth in these non-academic programs and
13 settings could incorporate literacy
14 development activities to help low-literacy
15 students improve their reading and writing.

16 IEL currently works with two
17 evidence-based youth programs. One is the
18 Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program, and
19 another called the High School High-Tech
20 Program, to engage youth with disabilities in
21 out-of-school time as well as after school and
22 sometimes during the school day.

1 And we know from experience that
2 these young people need literacy development
3 and that the staff who work with them could
4 benefit from training that will be provided to
5 educators within the school systems. So, we
6 hope that the states and the LEAs and the SEA
7 agencies will partner with these other
8 programs that are reaching adolescents to make
9 sure that those most at risk can be provided
10 the most effective literacy instruction in
11 multiple settings.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. GETTMAN: Good afternoon.

14 I'm Lucy Gettman, Director of
15 Federal Programs for the National School
16 Boards Association.

17 The National School Boards
18 Association, representing over 95,000 local
19 school board members across the nation through
20 our state school boards associations, is
21 pleased to submit this statement regarding SEA
22 and LEA capacity and support in the Striving

1 Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program.

2 Local school districts, governed
3 by school board members selected by and from
4 the communities they serve, are well-
5 positioned to help implement the new program.
6 Many school districts provide early learning
7 experiences for preschool children or
8 collaborate closely with early childhood
9 providers and, therefore, bridge much of the
10 birth-to-grade-12 continuum in the Striving
11 Readers Program.

12 NSBA applauds the Department's
13 efforts so far to disseminate \$10 million in
14 funds to states to establish or support state
15 literacy leadership teams. Broad knowledge
16 and experience from diverse perspectives on
17 these teams is vital to developing
18 comprehensive literacy plans to meet the needs
19 of all learners.

20 The next crucial step is to assure
21 that the remaining \$190 million in fiscal year
22 2010 funding is disseminated in a timely

1 manner to provide instruction, professional
2 development, assessments, and other critical
3 components of the comprehensive literacy plan.

4 State and local capacity and
5 support are essential to closing achievement
6 gaps and raising student achievement.

7 Therefore, NSBA's responses to the three
8 questions on SEA and LEA capacity and support
9 are as follows:

10 Question 1: perhaps the most
11 significant opportunity for state literacy
12 plans is to bridge the child development and
13 education continuum from birth to grade 12.
14 The historical independence of early learning
15 in K-12 systems is reflected in the structure
16 of funding and oversight that at times
17 undermines coordination, alignment, and
18 effectiveness.

19 The Striving Readers Program is a
20 unique opportunity to build a bridge along the
21 entire continuum in the area of literacy. To
22 maximize the impact of the program, it is

1 imperative that states recognize all these
2 elements in their plans.

3 One strategy to do so is to
4 optimize the expertise and opportunities
5 already available in each state. For example,
6 most states have or are establishing early
7 childhood advisory councils authorized in the
8 Head Start reauthorization to recommend
9 improvements for the quality, availability,
10 and coordination of services for children from
11 birth to school entry. There are,
12 undoubtedly, many other examples of expertise
13 and capacity, including those just described
14 in other public commentary.

15 Collaboration where appropriate
16 and possible on quality standards,
17 professional development assessments, and
18 other shared interests can increase the impact
19 of all and extend the reach and benefits to
20 all children.

21 Question 2: the Striving Readers
22 program can most effectively help SEAs and

1 LEAs transition to Common Core State Standards
2 by preserving the state and local role that
3 led to voluntary development and adoption of
4 the standards by most states.

5 The standards provide a framework
6 for assuring that all students are college and
7 career ready, but ultimately it will be up to
8 states and school districts to implement them.
9 Further, implementation of Striving Readers
10 must recognize that LEAs are subject to other
11 federal statutory accountability requirements,
12 such as those in the No Child Left Behind Act,
13 during the transition to Common Core
14 Standards. Therefore, Striving Readers should
15 maximize flexibility for school districts to
16 determine local needs and implement effective
17 strategies to address them.

18 Question 3: SEAs can play a
19 significant role in leveraging the use of
20 federal funds and resources under Striving
21 Readers by deploying state setaside funds for
22 technical assistance, professional

1 development, disseminating research, et
2 cetera, on comprehensive literacy. States may
3 also choose to review their state plans for
4 ESEA and other federal funds for additional
5 opportunities for coordination. However, it
6 is imperative that LEAs retain flexibility and
7 authority to determine how to use federal
8 funds in the most effective way.

9 In conclusion, local leadership
10 from LEAs and early childhood is crucial to
11 the success of the Striving Readers Program.
12 Other federal programs such as Promise
13 Neighborhoods fully recognize that community-
14 based solutions are the key to success. The
15 Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy
16 Program is a welcome opportunity that could
17 become a model for P-12 collaboration in other
18 areas.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to
20 provide this statement. NSBA looks forward to
21 an ongoing dialog. Please call on us to
22 assist in this vital work.

1 MS. MEADOWS: Good afternoon.

2 My name is Laura Meadows, and I'm
3 the Executive Director of Captions for
4 Literacy, a charitable trust. With me is our
5 Director, Jack Taggart.

6 We are most grateful to the
7 Department of Education for establishing its
8 Striving Leaders Comprehensive Literacy State
9 Grant Program and for giving organizations
10 such as ours a chance to comment on the design
11 of such a grant program.

12 The mission of Captions for
13 Literacy is to bring to the attention of the
14 general public the overlooked value of using
15 television captions to improve reading
16 ability. Opening the free television captions
17 provides a powerful opportunity for those
18 watching to connect the sound of the spoken
19 word with the sight of the printed word in the
20 context of the action unfolding on the screen
21 to explain or reinforce the meaning and
22 comprehension. Television becomes a free

1 reading practice resource.

2 There are two aspects of this
3 grant program that need to be considered in
4 drafting the program. First, we do not ask
5 that all grant applications include rigorous
6 scientific research as part of the program.
7 In the case of TV captions, for example, over
8 25 years of research has been done showing
9 their value for learning to read. What is
10 needed now is dissemination of the results of
11 this research to a general public.

12 To have family participation for
13 those under school age, we need a public
14 service announcement to spread the word to the
15 public at large about the value of TV
16 captions. Finland and India and a number of
17 other countries use captions as a part of
18 their educational effort very successfully.

19 Second, we urge that the Doing
20 What Works website of the Department of
21 Education mention the value of television
22 captions and the ability for organizations

1 such as ours to use this grant to encourage
2 states to build the use of television captions
3 into the state literacy programs.

4 Studies also show that, on
5 average, children watch television many hours
6 a day. Five to seven are some of the higher
7 numbers, thousands of hours every year, often
8 more hours than they spend in classrooms.
9 With television present in 98 percent of
10 American homes, that means that the use of
11 television captions to help learning to read
12 is very easily scalable.

13 It's tragic to waste this
14 opportunity to use this priceless free
15 television captions when the National
16 Assessment of Educational Progress reports
17 that over 50 percent of Blacks and Hispanics
18 fail to learn to read at the basic level by
19 the fourth grade.

20 There have been some objections to
21 children watching too much TV, usually without
22 considering the content. Fortunately, most

1 recently, in 2006, a pediatrician, Dimitri
2 Christakis, and Professor Fred Zimmerman have
3 analyzed both the content and the context in
4 which television is watched. They cite with
5 approval programs such as Between the Lions
6 which does use captions, not for everything,
7 but occasionally.

8 They say in their book,
9 "Television viewing can be beneficial. It can
10 be entertaining, broadening, and educational.
11 It just has to be used properly, generally
12 speaking, with age-appropriate programs."

13 The Department of Education
14 itself, of course, does give many grants to
15 PBS, WGBH, WETA for television programs. I'm
16 not quite sure how they don't require research
17 for those, but the research certainly is
18 something that they have done very much on
19 their own.

20 The years of the research that
21 have been done on TV captions is summarized on
22 our website, www.captionsforliteracy.org. I

1 have some cards and other materials for you,
2 in addition.

3 Thank you so very much.

4 MS. SCHILLER: Good afternoon.

5 I'm Ellen Schiller, and I'm with
6 SRI International, a policy research firm
7 located in Menlo Park, California. We also
8 have offices here in Arlington, Virginia.

9 I, too, want to thank the
10 Department for allowing us to speak today and
11 provide public comment.

12 Currently, SRI is conducting one
13 of the evaluations of a Striving Readers
14 grant, and we are also conducting, in
15 collaboration with MDRC, the IES evaluation of
16 the impact of RtI on reading outcomes of young
17 readers.

18 We are also in partnership with a
19 number of organizations where we provide
20 technical assistance to states on helping them
21 design, collect, and analyze formative and
22 summative systems for knowing whether or not

1 programs for young children work. It is in
2 that context that I provide our comments for
3 today.

4 First, we would like to encourage
5 the Department to elevate the importance of
6 the evaluation in the forthcoming
7 announcement. By doing so, the Department
8 will be able to speak to what worked and how.

9 While we recognize that an
10 evaluation is only the beginning, we also
11 would like to encourage the Department to take
12 a look and take the leadership, as other
13 federal programs have done, in elevating the
14 standards of the research or evaluation that
15 is conducted by the states to be able to
16 ultimately answer the questions of what worked
17 and how.

18 A number of years ago, I was a
19 special assistant in research in the Office of
20 Special Education programs at the Department.
21 So, I feel your pain because there is
22 statutory language that requires, and rightly

1 so, that 95 percent of the dollars go for
2 direct services to the children and 5 percent
3 of the monies go to the states for
4 administrative purposes, of which evaluation
5 could come under those 5 percent dollars, in
6 addition to the dollars that are allocated to
7 the Department for the National Assessment.

8 So, we would just like to
9 encourage you to look at those dollars that
10 would be available for evaluations carefully,
11 encourage partnerships among different
12 organizations because the challenges for
13 answering the question, what works and how, in
14 a project of this magnitude at the state level
15 are quite complex, and multiple expertise
16 needs to be at the table to help solve those
17 questions because, ultimately, you are going
18 to need to respond to Congress and to the
19 public what worked and how after \$178 million
20 was invested in a birth-to-12 state literacy
21 program.

22 So, thank you.

1 MS. FREENY: My name is Micki
2 Freeny. I am the Coordinator of Youth
3 Services for the District of Columbia Public
4 Library.

5 Because you have heard from other
6 speakers from the library community, I will
7 speak to you very briefly about the importance
8 of including public libraries on literacy
9 teams.

10 This has always been important
11 because of the supportive role that libraries
12 play in K-to-12 education. But, as your
13 efforts expand to include the birth-to-5
14 population, the participation of public
15 libraries is even more important.

16 For decades and decades, and
17 actually for more than a half a century now,
18 preschool storytime, when no one else was
19 providing this service, and which helped
20 promote school readiness and early literacy
21 skills, has been a staple of public library
22 services.

1 For many, many years, I and my
2 colleagues in public libraries before brain
3 research showed us to be right observed the
4 positive effect that reading aloud and sharing
5 books in a fun and positive way had on the
6 development of children, especially on their
7 acquisition of early literacy skills, the
8 skills they need before they can learn to
9 read.

10 Public libraries have not only
11 consistently provided age-appropriate
12 materials for parents to share with their
13 children at home -- free, I might add -- but
14 we also model positive behavior through our
15 storytimes to the parents and caregivers, and
16 often give direct instruction.

17 Many public libraries have
18 programs which teach parents about the six
19 early literacy skills and how to promote these
20 through singing, talking, and reading to their
21 children at home and in daycare locations.

22 We know that children who have

1 positive experiences with books and reading
2 from infancy are more motivated to learn to
3 read, and a motivated learner is a better
4 learner.

5 Public libraries are a very
6 important player in the realm of early
7 childhood development and education. Please
8 consider them as important partners in
9 statewide literacy efforts.

10 MS. SPITZ: Well, with that, I am
11 going to conclude our program today. Thank
12 you very much.

13 Well, first, I would like to thank
14 again our panelists. Thank you so much for
15 being here. And the Department officials that
16 helped out today.

17 (Applause.)

18 And we do very much appreciate the
19 public comments that we received today, and
20 certainly will take them into consideration.

21 If anyone did bring written
22 statements to submit, they should submit those

1 at the registration desk.

2 And we did record today's session.
3 So, that will be posted on our website when it
4 is available, I think probably a few days into
5 next week, and also all the materials from
6 today's session.

7 I also want to thank the folks who
8 attended -- we really appreciate that -- and
9 also the people on our webcast.

10 So, thank you very much and have a
11 good evening and weekend.

12 (Applause.)

13 (Whereupon, at 3:26 p.m., the
14 proceedings in the above-entitled matter were
15 adjourned.)

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